

WWNO (Ger.)
5130

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

UNCLASSIFIED

WAR DIARY

German Naval Staff Operations Division

181

PART A VOLUME 3

NOVEMBER 1939

DECLASSIFYING LAW FOR MEMO OF 3 MAY 1972, SUBJECT
DECLASSIFICATION OF WWII RECORDS

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

UNCLASSIFIED

WAR DIARY OF THE GERMAN NAVAL STAFF

(Operations Division)

PART A

Chief, Naval Staff:	Grand Admiral Dr. h.c. Raeder
Chief of Staff, Naval Staff:	Rear Admiral Schniewind
Chief, Operations Division, Naval Staff:	Rear Admiral Fricke

Volume 3

begun:	1 Nov. 1939
closed:	30 Nov. 1939

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

11

12

13

14

Confidential

OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

Washington, D.C.

Foreword

1. The Office of Naval Intelligence has undertaken to translate important parts of the War Diary of the German Naval Staff. The present volume, entitled War Diary of the German Naval Staff, Operations Division, Part A, Volume 3 is the nineteenth one of the series to appear. Other volumes will follow shortly.

2. The War Diaries, Part A, are important because they contain a day by day summary of the information available to the German Naval Staff and the decisions reached on the basis thereof. Together with the Fuehrer Conferences on Matters Dealing with the German Navy, 1939-1945, and the Fuehrer Directives, 1939-1945, which have been published by this office, the War Diaries should provide valuable material for the study of naval problems arising from total war. The War Diary, Part A, is also a useful index to the German Naval Archives of World War II; references may be found in the micro-film library of Naval Records and Library.

3. Due to the cost of publication, only a limited number of copies could be made; it is therefore desirable that the copies which have been distributed are made available to other offices which may be interested.

Washington, D.C.
1948

Confidential

11

1 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Special Reports on the Enemy 1 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

On 31 Oct. the cruiser DESPATCH sailed into the Panama Canal at Colon and should reach Balboa on 1 Nov.; her destination is unknown.

Radio Monitoring Service has detected the battleship RESOLUTION in the Canadian area. Transmitted to the pocket battleships.

According to Radio Daventry, on the forenoon of 1 Nov. the Canadian radio station, Camperdown, picked up the distress signal of a steamer: "SOS submarine" (Given in original Tr. N.), which was lying some hundred miles northeast of the Bermudas. It is thought to be a British ship. Four ships, including two American warships, are proceeding to the scene of the incident. The position was reached by a patrol vessel but nothing was found.

Naval Interrogation Service, Bilbao reported that British steamers, coming from Spanish ports, are assembling into convoys at Bayonne. British convoys from Gibraltar are being escorted to the west by warships and planes as far as Cape St. Vincent. Air reconnaissance is carried out from there to the north and west. Then the **ships** are said to proceed to the north without **naval** escort, keeping a good distance away from the Portuguese coast. They are escorted by steamers all armed with four guns and equipped with smoke-screen apparatus and depth charges.

France:

Radio monitoring reported brisk air reconnaissance from Brest towards the west and in the direction of the Bay of Biscay, which is probably connected with the convoy which was off Cape Finisterre on 31 Oct. There were several submarine reports.

North Sea:

Enemy Reports:

No enemy reports except the usual sightings of some single light naval vessels off the east coast.

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Fresh reports from Norway have confirmed that steamers are converging on the central part of the Norwegian coast in order to assemble into convoys for the west.

According to observations made by fishermen, patrols between the Faroes and Iceland are being carried out by a few destroyers.

Own Situation 1 Nov.

Atlantic: }
North Sea: } Nothing to report.

Baltic Sea:

Two minelayers put out for operations against merchant shipping in the Aland Hav and the Gulf of Bothnia.

Group East was transferred to Kiel on 1 Nov. and has been attached to the Baltic Sea Station. Commanding Admiral, Baltic Sea Station, Admiral Carls, will take command as Naval Group Commander.

Submarine Situation.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

North Sea:

Submarine U "23" put out into the North Sea operational area. Otherwise nothing to report.

Submarine Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

Radio London announced that the 4,666 ton British steamer CORMONA was sunk without warning on 31 Oct.

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Merchant Shipping 1 Nov.

The captain of a steamer which has returned home from Vigo reported that before leaving he asked the consulate there for orders to Riga. Thereupon he was handed a note bearing the consulate stamp which read as follows: "The Embassy's answer to the telephone enquiry I made yesterday: The only sailing instructions that hold for German shipping are those emanating directly from Germany." The source of the Embassy's information should be investigated, for it partly explains why such a large number of German ships remained in Vigo (of a total of 36 ships only eight put out for the break-through to home waters).

The Legation in Stockholm has confirmed an agent's report which told of how the British were buying up Swedish pit props at the highest prices and transporting them from Northern Sweden to **Geotoborg** and Narvik by rail.

The following information has been transmitted to the pocket battleships in the Atlantic:

1. **When** meeting supply ships beware of enemy submarines which may **have been following them.** The departure of both the supply ships has been detected by the enemy intelligence service.
2. Ten "C" and "D" class cruisers and probably also some auxiliary cruisers form the Northern Patrol. The patrol positions are unknown. Denmark Strait is being presumably patrolled by auxiliary cruisers.

CONFIDENTIAL

2 Nov. 1939
1100 hours

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Soecial Items:

1. The Chief, Operations Branch, Operations Division reported on the minelaying operations which it is planned to carry out with destroyers in the estuaries of the Thames and Humber.

(See orders of Commanding Admiral, West: 1525 A I
Gkdos: 30 Oct. 1939).

The Chief, Naval Staff fully sanctioned this operation and attached especial importance to the early execution of the Thames operation.

2. Because the North Sea channels have to be constantly swept, all minesweeping flotillas consisting of minesweepers must be assigned. When several tasks have to be carried out in one night, such as searching sweeps of mine **gaps** within the declared area, the fishing vessels of the auxiliary minesweeping flotillas are not fast enough. Because there are no urgent minefield operations at present awaiting the 7th Minesweeper Flotilla in the Baltic Sea, it will be assigned to Group West once a date for the transfer has been fixed between both groups. It would be desirable for the transfer to take place as soon as possible. Then, the 1st Minesweeper Flotilla and the 11th, 13th, 15th, 17th and 19th Minesweeper Flotillas, consisting of fishing vessels, would still remain in the Baltic Sea. After the transfer of the 7th Minesweeper Flotilla there would still remain in the North Sea:

The 2nd, 4th, 6th, 7th Minesweeper Flotillas (minesweepers).

The 12th, 14th, 16th, 18th Minesweeper Flotillas
(auxiliary vessels).

Special Reports on the Enemy 2 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Eritain:

Radio Monitoring Service has confirmed that British naval radio stations are transmitting messages to the British Consulate in Las Palmas via the Spanish radio station there, which are set up in naval code and recoded in naval cipher. Consequently, naval communications personnel and presumably one British Naval Communications Officer are attached to the British Consulate.

CONFIDENTIAL

2 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

On 31 Oct. British destroyers entered Pernambuco to refuel.
(Transmitted to the pocket battleships).

Neutrals:

The Attaché in Rio reported as follows: "Except for a few small ships which sometimes put out to sea, Brazil does not for the moment intend to introduce patrols. Submarines of belligerent powers should resort to ports and territorial waters in accordance with the law of neutrality and only for as long as strictly necessary."

France:

According to radio monitoring, long-range reconnaissance planes are being transferred from Port Lyautey to Port Etienne. The planes were transferred from the west coast of France to Port Lyautey a few days ago. On 2 Nov. air reconnaissance will be carried out by these long-range reconnaissance planes in the area of the Cape Verde Islands.

The Attaché in Madrid reports that the submarine menace has been intensified off the Canary Islands owing to the presence of French submarines (6th Squadron).

North Sea:

According to enemy air reconnaissance carried out on the afternoon of 2 Nov., the cruiser NEWCASTLE and other ships were detected in the Skagerrak, and during the night of 2 Nov. a further ship was detected 45 miles northwest of Amrum Bank. This is probably an enemy attempt to recapture the DEUTSCHLAND's prize, the CITY OF FLINT.

Own Situation 2 Nov.

<u>Atlantic:</u>	}	Nothing to report.
<u>North Sea:</u>		

Baltic Sea:

Submarine **chase** in the western part of the Baltic Sea continued to be without result.

The TANNENBERG and HANSESTADT DANZIG carried out operations against merchant shipping in the Gulf of Bothnia, west of 20° E.

CONFIDENTIAL

2 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

According to recent investigations, the Danish side of the Cjedser minefield is surrounded by a 5 meter deep navigable channel. As ships **are said to have passed safely through the minefield, the belief exists that it is not an active one.**

Submarine Situation.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

Submarine U "26" reported having crossed 45° N, 13° W.

North Sea:

Submarine U "13" is returning from a North Sea operation.

Submarine U "57" is homeward bound.

Submarine U "59" reported that on 28 Oct. two British fishing vessels were sunk with demolition charges and one patrol boat of the larger type, similar to the 640 ton AGATHE was torpedoed.

Merchant Shipping 2 Nov.

According to available information, the tanker EMMY FRIEDRICH, loaded with supplies for the GRAF SPEE, was scuttled in the Caribbean Sea within the American security zone on 24 Oct. to avoid seizure by the British cruiser DESPATCH. (For the report of the sinking according to Radio Daventry see volume "Merchant Shipping Situation" 3 Nov. 1939).

With the loss of the EMMY FRIEDRICH, the only steamer en route with supplies for the GRAF SPEE is the DRESDEN. This ship too, is being shadowed by enemy intelligence and by specially assigned naval forces. Her chances of breaking through should, however, be better than those of the EMMY FRIEDRICH which had to put out of the Gulf of Mexico, which was heavily patrolled by the enemy.

CONFIDENTIAL

2 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

In Santiago, Chile, it was learned from the "Corriere delle Sera" of 1 Nov. that the German steamer DRESDEN left Valparaiso and was proceeding through the Strait of Magellan to Europe.

The prize CITY OF FLINT, escorted by Norwegian naval vessels, is continuing her passage southwards along the Norwegian coast.

The American Government has asked the German and British Governments not to expose the crew of the CITY OF FLINT to unnecessary danger. America fears two possibilities: either that the ship may be blown up by the German prize crew or else sunk in an encounter with British naval forces.

CONFIDENTIAL

3 Nov. 1939
1130 hours

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference with the Operations Officer, Group West,
Commander Meyer.

1. Operation West:

The Operations Officer, Group West reported on the operations it proposed to carry out in support of the Army.

First of all, minefields must be laid off the mainland against enemy landings. The following basic measures have been planned, which will be ordered quite independently of each other:

- a. Destroyers will lay mines and explosive floats outside the ports.
- b. Submarines will be used for minelaying and torpedo operations, according to weather conditions.
- c. He "59" planes will be used for LMA minelaying operations between the moles of harbor entrances.

The preparations and all necessary individual measures will be ordered by separate key-words, but the operation itself will not be carried out until so ordered by Naval Staff.

Because submarine preparations have to be started in very good time, Group West requested that the key-word for this operation be released to them at least five days in advance. Although agreeing with the plans of the Group, the Chief, Operations Division explained that although all preparations would have to be made, their actual execution would largely depend on the assessments made of the political situation. In any case, the Navy always has to follow the lead of the Army as far as taking any offensive measures is concerned. In addition to ensuring the execution of static measures such as minelaying operations, the Chief, Operations Division considered it of the utmost importance that all preparations for mobile operations by submarines, PT boats, destroyers, and planes should be completed.

The Operations Officer, Group West emphasized that the PT boat groups have fallen short of expectations in every respect, as has indeed been expressed in the directive issued by the Naval Staff on the operations of PT boat groups. The way in which the boats are being converted is highly unsatisfactory. The conversions have been done so roughly that the boats look suspicious even from afar. The weapons are so badly camouflaged that the real identity of the boats can be easily detected from a plane. The positions of the MG C/30 machine-guns on deck are quite visible.

CONFIDENTIAL

3 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The **ships'** range does not correspond to the preliminary investigations made by the Naval Staff. (According to recent calculations, only 2,500 - 3,000 miles can be expected). Their speed is not twelve knots as was originally claimed, but only nine knots. Group West considers that these boats can only be put into operation after thorough trials and further improvements have been carried out.

These findings are very regrettable and most disappointing in view of the hopes which recent calculations had held out to the Naval Staff. These failures are attributed to the fact that the Naval Office in Hamburg is excessively overworked and also because the material preparations for the PT boat groups were only begun in September 1939 at the outbreak of the war, which came at an entirely unexpected time.

The Naval Staff issued the following directive to the Groups and the Commander, Submarines on putting naval forces into operation against British timber imports:

"In the Baltic Sea, take advantage of every possible opportunity for capturing them by mustering every single at all suitable naval vessel for this task. In the North Sea, apart from the short operations which have been carried out until now in the Skagerrak and off the south of Norway, try to **make it possible at any time to seize the ships** by sending out parts of the PT boat groups and submarines."

(For directive see: War Diary, Part C, Vol. II, North Sea).

Special Reports on the Enemy 3 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

On 3 Nov. Radio Monitoring Service reported the auxiliary cruiser SALOPLONAN, to be off Cape da Roca, proceeding to Freetown. The netlayer PROTECTOR was detected proceeding from Gibraltar to a West African port.

According to an agent's report from Spain, three passenger steamers of the ALMAZONA and the ALCANTARA class are lying in Gibraltar, allegedly leaving for France with troops of the Welsh Regiment which is ready for action.

(Will be transmitted to the Atlantic submarines).

CONFIDENTIAL

3 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The Naval Attaché in Washington reported that regular British convoys have been introduced in the Caribbean Sea. The assembly point is Kingston, Jamaica. (Markings: KJ plus number). The convoys also include neutral ships, mainly Norwegian ones. Considerable oil shipments and refuelings are being carried out in Trinidad.

The REPULSE and the FURIOUS have been detected in North American waters since 1 Nov.

(Transmitted to the pocket battleships).

On 2 Nov. radio monitoring reported the departure of the convoy HX 7 (Markings: HX-Halifax) from Halifax. It was escorted by the RESOLUTION and the REVENGE, the BERWICK and the EMERALD.

(Transmitted to the pocket battleships).

France:

Radio monitoring detected destroyers and planes carrying out reconnaissance in the Channel and west of Brest for the protection of merchant shipping.

It was reported that 3,000 Senegalese were being transported to Bordeaux on board the steamer ASIE.

North Sea:

According to Radio Monitoring Service, there were light enemy naval vessels, including the cruisers NEWCASTLE and GLASGOW, southwest of Southern Norway; further ships were approximately 100 miles east of the Fair Isle Passage.

The British Rear Admiral, Submarines at present has his headquarters at Aberdure (Firth of Forth).

According to Stockholm newspapers, the Swedish steamer ALBANIA was hit amidships by a torpedo and sank in three minutes off the British coast. It is assumed that she struck a mine.

Baltic Sea:

No submarine detections have been reported for the last six days. Group East, therefore, reported no submarine danger at the moment.

CONFIDENTIAL

3 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Own Situation 3 Nov.

Atlantic: }
North Sea: } Nothing to report.
Baltic Sea: }

Submarine Situation:

Atlantic:

In the operational area: Submarines U "26", U "53",
U "40", U "42" (?), U "45" (?).

Outward bound: Submarine U "33" northwest of Scotland.

Homeward bound: Submarines U "34", U "37", U "46"
northwest of Scotland.

Submarine U "25" reported: "Whilst firing, one side of
cross piece of forward torpedo hatch broken. Should
depth charges be dropped, doubtful whether boat could
dive. Boat has started homeward passage. Position
north of Cape Ortegal."

North Sea:

In the operational area: Submarine U "21" off Firth of
Forth.

U "56" }
U "58" } Orkneys.
U "59" }
U "61" } Norwegian
coast.

Outward bound: Submarine U "23" to the central part of
the North Sea.

Homeward bound: Submarine U "57".

CONFIDENTIAL

3 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Submarine Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

According to radio monitoring, on 3 Nov., at 1050, a British plane attacked a German submarine north of the Hebrides. The boat is said to have submerged.

Merchant Shipping.

In her attempt to anchor off Haugesund, contrary to the orders of the escorting Norwegian warships, the prize CITY OF FLINT was seized by the Norwegians and her prize crew taken to Bergen.

A sharp protest has been lodged with the Norwegian Government.

Radio Daventry has already reported the incident, pointing out that the ship is now under American control and can, therefore, sail wherever she likes.

The turn over of iron ore in German ports:

October 1939:	1,063,436 tons.	September 1939:	832,563 tons.
October 1938:	446,600 tons.	September 1938:	632,100 tons.

For a report of the discussions of the Chief, Fleet Operations Section at Group West and of Chief, Operations Branch at Group East see Part B, Vol. V, page 43.

4 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance: see "Political Survey 61."

Special Items.

1. The Russo-Finnish situation has grown more strained. Negotiations have now reached a crucial stage. The Russians have adopted a very brusque attitude towards the Finnish delegation.
2. As a result of strong Government pressure, the United States House of Representatives finally passed the Neutrality Bill with a majority of 71 votes. The arms embargo has, therefore, been lifted.
3. According to a certain report, as yet unconfirmed, Great Britain has rejected the American 300 mile security zone agreed upon at the Panama Conference.

As all attempts to obtain permission for German naval forces to be at least reasonably adequately supplied in Spain have failed, obviously due to the lack of good will on the part of the various Spanish officials, as has indeed been directly reported to us, the Naval Staff approached the Foreign Office requesting it to investigate the matter with the Spanish Government. Some time ago Franco explained that the main stumbling block to more active support from Spanish officials was the existence of a well organized British net of agents which it was essential to destroy, a task which would take about two months to accomplish. We should, therefore, now be able to assume that this obstacle has been overcome and that the Spanish Government can once again act more freely.

It is imperative that the Naval Staff should obtain a clear assurance from the Spanish Government that it can really be depended on in case of need to keep its promise to take active steps against its own subordinate authorities, because further plans can only be made on the basis of such an assurance.

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items.

1. For the remarks on the question of blocking the whole of the western part of the Baltic Sea against enemy submarine attacks and on increasing the efficiency of German merchant shipping control, made in connection with the question of expanding the Sound minefield up to the three mile limit of Swedish territorial waters and blocking the Great Belt with minefields, including the territorial waters, see: War Diary, Part C, Vol. VI, "Mine Warfare."

CONFIDENTIAL

4 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The Foreign Office was requested to carry out the necessary diplomatic preliminaries for the execution of the new measures by mentioning to the Swedish and Danish Governments that the German Naval Staff was in possession of recent papers proving that enemy submarines have been in Swedish and Danish territorial waters contrary to the neutrality laws of the Northern States. The Governments of Sweden and Denmark will be requested to take all the necessary steps to prevent a repetition of these incidents.

2. Chief, Operations Branch made a personal report on the operations which Group West proposes to carry out for Operation West. The Chief, Naval Staff agreed in principle.

3. A suitable berth for the first weeks of their return to home waters is being sought for the DEUTSCHLAND and the WESTERWALD; it must, on the one hand, be a place where their return will go undiscovered for as long as possible, and it must on the other hand be able to provide the necessary relaxation, and also afford protection against submarine attacks. Gdynia or the Wohlenberger Wik near Wismar would both be possibilities. The ships should be warned in good time that it will not be possible for leave to be granted immediately **for security reasons**.

In accordance with the Fuehrer's orders, the DEUTSCHLAND is on her return to be renamed LUETZOW. A suitable time for the renaming will have to be decided on. The hat bands of the DEUTSCHLAND's crew are to be withdrawn and new ones with the inscription "Kriegsmarine" issued.

4. The North Sea Station reported that the nets at present available for blocking the Elbe and the Jade will not be strong enough to provide adequate protection for the anchorages in the North Sea.

New, stronger nets and buoys will be required. Until, they arrive, an improvised net and a hawser boom will be laid out. Steps have been taken to accelerate the supply of nets.

1200
hours

In a conference between the Branches of the High Command, Navy concerned, the Chief, Naval Staff heard a report on the state of the military exchange negotiations with Italy and Russia.

1. The Italians have requested twelve electric torpedoes and one submarine fire control system and would also like to be instructed in the operating of the German warhead pistol. A net barrage, one of the latest Italian front line torpedoes, submarine-laid mines and anti-submarine kites will be delivered in exchange. The services proposed in exchange are considered inadequate. Germany's main request for submarine deliveries and for the establishment of facilities for obtaining supplies in Italian ports and bays have not yet been fulfilled. Inquiries into these requests have yet to be clearly answered. Should Italy meet these wishes

CONFIDENTIAL

4 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

half way, the Chief, Naval Ordnance Division would suggest handing over two electric torpedoes (more will be impossible at present for technical reasons) and giving instructions in Germany on how to operate the warhead pistol with the aid of a working model.

The Chief, Naval Staff felt that as Italy was at the moment entirely indebted to us, it should, therefore, be taken for granted that we be given generous terms in the form of submarine deliveries and guarantees that they will also be supplied, without the Italians having to expect anything in return. We would at the present time be most unjustified in handing weapons over to the Italians which should give us a certain advantage over the enemy in the further prosecution of the war. The matter would of course be quite different if Italy were to come in on our side. The final decision will be postponed until a definite reply to the German requests about purchasing submarines and having them supplied has been received from Italy.

2. In the negotiations which have not yet been concluded with the Russian delegation, it is clear that above all, Russia would like to have the cruisers SEYDLITZ and LUETZOW in exchange for deliveries of goods. Russia would like Germany to take over various building programs for her. But the problem of providing the labor and the weapons would be very difficult to solve. Further investigations will, therefore, have to be made.

The Chief, Naval Staff has indicated that the **negotiations** are to proceed, based on the following points:

a. Basically, every effort should be made to meet the Russian demands, but the limitations of the German shipbuilding industry, working to full capacity for the war effort, must be made quite clear.

b. The delivery of the SEYDLITZ is quite out of the question; but the cruiser LUETZOW and aircraft carrier "B" can be offered to the Russians.

c. We cannot allow our own strategically vitally necessary building program to be held back in any way by making deliveries of still further new constructions or other kinds of material and machinery to Russia. Weapons and equipment can only be delivered within the limits set by the capacity and the number of the workers available.

CONFIDENTIAL

4 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Soecial Reports on the Enemy 4 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Apart from various reports of convoys, nothing to report. The heavily escorted convoys from Canada show that the transportation of Canadian troops has begun.

France:

Radio monitoring reported the transfer of one cruiser, presumably the JEAN DE VIPNNE, from Toulon to Casablanca; she should pass Gibraltar on 6 Nov. In addition, three submarines will probably leave the Mediterranean for the Moroccan bases.

The transfer may be connected with the increasing number of transports with French colonial troops aboard.

Because submarines have been repeatedly reported in the Channel, several vessels have been put into operation there, including the 11th Destroyer Division.

North Sea:

On 3 Nov. the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet was at sea in the area of the Orkneys with several destroyers of the 6th Flotilla.

According to an agent's report, one of the warships which was attacked on 16 Oct. in the Firth of Forth is said to be lying half submerged in Leith. It may be the destroyer MOHAWK.

On 4 Nov. a considerable number of minesweepers appeared in the Rosyth and Scapa areas. The enemy is presumably trying to overcome the minefield menace off the east coast which during the night of 4 Nov. cost him two steamers, including the 11,000 GRT Danish steamer KANADA. The second steamer was a Greek one which struck a mine off the South Goodwin Sands. The detection of a vessel off Utsire suggests that the measures being taken to capture the German prize have not yet been completed. For a survey of the information gained by Radio Monitoring Service on the distribution of forces at the end of October and of the activity of the main French and British units see "Radio Monitoring Report 9/39" (closed 1 Nov. 1939).

4 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Special Items:

Great Britain:

Home Waters:

Most of the available forces are being used for escort duties. In the Shetlands and in Northern Scotland, the heavy naval forces of the Home Fleet are lying in readiness for operations in the Atlantic and the North Sea. The REPULSE and the FURIOUS have been assigned to the Atlantic.

Many escort and submarine chasing operations were noticed **in the** coastal waters. There were constant air patrols in support of anti-submarine operations.

Atlantic: There were strong convoy escorts even far out to sea. Task forces for the protection of trade routes and for attacking German raiders have been formed. They either consist of one battleship and one aircraft carrier, or of one battleship and one cruiser, or else of heavy cruisers only.

Main Task Forces:

South Atlantic: RENOWN, ARK ROYAL or HERMES.

North Atlantic: REPULSE, FURIOUS.
REVENGE, RESOLUTION.

Indian Ocean: MALAYA, GLORIOUS.
" CORNWALL, EAGLE.

Mediterranean: The majority of the naval forces are in the Eastern Mediterranean, and some are undergoing a dockyard period.

France:

Channel Coast: Light naval forces and planes were on patrol operations.

Atlantic: Heavy naval forces and cruisers are escorting and rallying convoys when they are still far away from the coast. The air reconnaissance and air patrols of the convoys have increased in strength.

Radio intelligence is working very thoroughly against German Atlantic submarines. Immediately the locations **are** received, the convoy routes **are** altered and anti-submarine measures taken.

CONFIDENTIAL

4 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The naval forces along the coast of West Africa have been reinforced, Dakar being their main base.

Mediterranean: Convoy traffic.

Own Situation 4 Nov.

Atlantic:)
North Sea:) Nothing to report.

Baltic Sea:

The activities of the minefield patrols in the Sound and in the Belts have been severely restricted owing to the weather. (southeasterly gale). The warfare against merchant shipping **is being** continued in Alands Hai and in the Gulf of Bothnia by two minelayers, and in Henoe Bay by patrol boats. Minesweeping operations in Danzig Bay again revealed the presence of mines.

Submarine Situation:

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

North Sea:

Submarine U "23" is on the approach route to special operation "Cromarty". Submarine U "60" put out for the operational area in the North Sea (Norwegian coast).

Otherwise nothing to report.

Submarine Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

Radio Daventry reported:

A torpedo was unsuccessfully fired against the 6,655 ton British steamer BRANDON northwest of Ireland.

CONFIDENTIAL

4 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The 3,400 ton British steamer MERWYN was sunk in the Atlantic.

The 65,876 ton French freighter PAOULE was sunk in the Atlantic.

Special Items:

1. According to a newspaper report, experts now seem to think that German torpedoes are fitted with delayed action fuses, and not with time fuses as previously supposed.

2. Venezuela has forbidden submarines to put into her harbors unless damaged.

It is not intended to introduce patrol duties.

Surface Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

The DEUTSCHLAND's prize, the CITY OF FLINT, is still lying in Bergen. The prize crew has been interned by Norway. It is expected that the CITY OF FLINT will be released to America.

The fact that the prize will most probably be withdrawn from German control is considered to be particularly regrettable, all the more so as it would have been quite possible to proceed with the ship to home waters if all the officials concerned had been energetic, punctilious, and responsible.

The reports submitted (see War Diary, Part B, Vol. V, page 44 and Part C, Vol. VIII) reveal that the vice-consul who has only been in Haugesund a short time, underestimated the importance of the ship and by wrongly interpreting the directive sent to him, was largely instrumental in the failure which accompanied the bringing in of this ship. The boarding officer was also unequal to his task. From these failures Naval Staff has come to the conclusion that greater care than ever must be taken to word its orders to Reich authorities and merchant shipping as thoroughly and as clearly as possible.

By virtue of a report as yet unconfirmed, that the departure of the CITY OF FLINT is being planned, the Commander, Submarines was instructed if possible to operate once more with submarine U "61" and other boats against the CITY OF FLINT and to bring her into a German port after stopping her in accordance with prize regulations.

CONFIDENTIAL

4 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

To gain the utmost support for German naval interests in Norwegian ports, the Chief, Naval Staff has ordered that naval reserve officers be detailed to the consulates in all the important Norwegian ports. And apart from these partial measures, the establishment of a widespread organization attached to German missions abroad in support of the Naval Staff's economic warfare would be indicated.

Merchant Shipping 4 Nov.

The discovery of two of the lifeboats of the steamer POSEIDON off the west coast of Ireland confirms the supposition that the ship was scuttled before the British prize crew was able to board her.

Up to 15 Nov. the following tonnage must be given up as lost:

Seized at the outbreak of war	5	steamers	totalling	21,634	GRT
Captured and brought in	5	"	"	32,777	GRT
Scuttled	<u>9</u>	"	"	<u>44,150</u>	GRT
Total losses:	19	"	"	98,561	GRT

(For names and tonnage of ships see: Part B, Vol. VII).

Customs Clearance Service.

On 29 Oct. the Hague Legation made the following report:

"The Dutch Government categorically refuses to support any measures which could be interpreted as being a contribution to the war effort of belligerent powers. This includes proposals such as those made by Great Britain to Dutch shipping companies that they voluntarily place themselves under a British control."

According to a Dutch newspaper report, the British authorities have announced that several Dutch shipping companies have come to an arrangement with the British by which they have undertaken to send their ship's papers to England in advance. In this way contraband investigations based on the ship's papers can be carried out in the port of investigation before the arrival of the ships, thus enabling them to proceed again immediately after having reported their arrival. The Dutch Government has announced that it would never request special treatment which could then be interpreted as direct participation in the measures of a belligerent power, **regardless which.**

CONFIDENTIAL

5 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

As a result of the German note to the Swedish Government stating that Germany would definitely only recognize the three mile limit as being territorial waters and would extend the minefield in the Sound up to this limit, the Swedish plenipotentiary has urgently requested us to desist from laying any mines until the Swedish reply has been thoroughly studied by the German Government. Moreover, the Naval Attaché has pointed out that the announced extension of the German boundaries means that they will jut into the Swedish three mile limit, owing to the different interpretations of the points on the mainland from which the three mile limit should be measured.

The Swedish request will be complied with and the minefield will not be laid out for the present. But in future Germany will only recognize a three mile limit as being Swedish territorial waters.

(For further details: see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII).

The Economic Warfare Branch of the Foreign Office (Ambassador Ritter) plans to accelerate the switch-over of trade with the Baltic States and Finland to Germany by destroying their former trade connections with England as thoroughly as possible.

This plan could best be supported by stopping or badly hampering the trade of these states to countries outside the Baltic Sea and Sweden (transit calls). An intensive war against merchant shipping will, therefore, have to be waged; ships will have to be brought in even on the slightest suspicion of being about to make a transit call; the examination and the clearance formalities delayed as much as possible.

Directive of Naval Staff to Groups East and West (with copy to the Air Force General attached to the Commander-in-Chief, Navy) on the employment of naval air formations in the struggle against **Britain**

The naval air **forces** are mainly to concentrate on carrying out reconnaissance over the open sea and to confine their actual fighting with the types of planes available at the moment, to anti-submarine **chase** and anti-submarine action and also to attacking chance small enemy surface vessels. **They are** to use torpedoes against enemy surface vessels and merchantmen **only** given favorable weather conditions and good tactical possibilities. Whenever the weather or the moment seem to offer a favorable opportunity for laying mines in enemy **coastal waters**, it must only be done in close co-operation with the X Air Corps. (For further details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. V).

5 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Special Reports on the Enemy 5 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Radio monitoring confirms the distribution of the British naval forces in the Atlantic only guessed at until now: (the underlined names were again confirmed on 4 and 5 Nov.).

Canada-West Indies:

REVENGE, RESOLUTION (?), YORK, ORION, ENTERPRISE, REPULSE, FURIOUS, destroyers, gunboats, DIOMEDES, EMERALD.

Off the Bermudas.

BERWICK, PERTH, one destroyer.

West coast of Central America.

DESPATCH.

Freetown:

ALBATROS, HERMES.

Also RENOWN, NEPTUNE, DANAE, destroyers, gunboats.

South Atlantic:

CUMBERLAND, EXETER, AJAX, ACHILLES, 2 destroyers.

North Sea:

An agent's reports from Bergen confirm that a convoy of steamers carrying iron ore is ready to put out from Bergen for the west, and radio monitoring further confirms this by having detected light enemy forces putting out for this operation.

Near Orfordness Xth Air **Corps** reconnaissance planes sighted a convoy consisting of three cruisers, on a south-southwesterly course; but otherwise no signs of the enemy along the central part of the enemy east coast. Reconnaissance activities were badly handicapped owing to the weather.

It has been confirmed that the 11,000 ton Danish steamer KANADA and the 5,000 ton Greek steamer NIKOLAUS both struck mines. Furthermore a 1,300 ton Norwegian steamer sank off the Humber, apparently also by striking a mine.

5 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Own Situation:

Atlantic:)
North Sea:) Nothing to report.

Baltic Sea:

Warfare against merchant shipping and patrol duties were badly handicapped owing to the weather.

Submarine Situation.

Atlantic:

Submarine U "53" up to now southwest of Ireland, was ordered to proceed on her passage south.

Homeward bound boats:

U "25" Bay of Biscay

U "34") northern part of the North Sea
U "37")

U "46" in the Skagerrak

North Sea:

Submarine U "57" has returned from her operation.

Submarines U "23" and U "21" have reported the execution of their special minelaying operation of TM mines in the Firth of Moray (Cromarty) and in the Firth of Forth, respectively.

Submarine U "13" on her return from the operational area off Kinnaird Head reported that she had torpedoed and sunk the 4,666 ton British steamer CAIRMONA off Peterhead. There were heavy patrols in the operational area, and much shipping traffic making for Peterhead coming from the north and northeast; lighting was as in peace time.

CONFIDENTIAL

5 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The submarines which were ordered to capture the CITY OF FLINT are suffering from the bad weather conditions and from the lack of fuel of the homeward bound boats. Only, submarines U "34" off Sogne Fiord and U "61" off Kors Fiord (Marstenen) could be dispatched to waiting positions.

Merchant Shipping 5 Nov.

The 5,042 ton German steamer TOGO was sunk by the French submarine cruiser SURCOUF off Lobito.

According to information from Antwerp, the German motorship POMONA was requisitioned by the London prize court. The grounds for the requisitioning, that the ship was urgently needed for **shipments to England**, was approved by the prize court. This appears to be something new in British policy for in this way the ownership of the ship is not transferred and the German owner is in theory still in possession of the ship.

The requisitioning of the steamer HANNAH BOEGE was also recognized at the same **session**. The court exempted the private property of the **crews** from the order.

CONFIDENTIAL

6 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance.

Special Items.

1. Continuation of Russo-Finnish negotiations. The Russians are insisting on their demand for the concession of a base near Hangoe. The Finns are doing their utmost to prevent the establishment of a naval base on the mainland.
2. As regards the possibility of Turkey entering into the war, the impression now prevailing is that despite the supplementary protocol (Russian clause), if Turkey has to fight it will be on the British side against the Russians and that all necessary measures to this end are being already taken now - General Weygand is Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Army in the Middle East and "Advisor to the Turkish Government".
3. Great Britain is beginning to take large-scale commercial measures in order to make it virtually impossible for Germany's export trade to continue (granting credit to neutral countries, buying up their output and raw materials, **bringing** economic pressure to bear).
4. On 6 Nov. conference of the Oslo Convention States in Copenhagen for the discussion of neutrality problems. A plan for joint action against the **contraband** list was also put forward.

The Chief, Naval Staff is in Wilhelmshaven for discussions with the Commanding Admiral, Group West. The situation was discussed with special reference to the break-through planned for the pocket battleships and to operation West.

A detailed examination of the possibilities for shipping within the limits of the Swedish three mile territorial waters revealed that although in theory ships with a draught of less than five meters will in fact have no need to leave Swedish territorial waters because the fairways are well marked with buoys and **other means**, shipping will nevertheless in practice probably be very handicapped and in many cases, especially during unfavorable weather conditions, even ships of medium tonnage will have to leave the territorial waters, particularly at Falsterbo. (See note on page 26). The strategic advantages are clear and the Naval Staff is therefore continuing to insist on its demands. Now that the Swedish note has been received (see War Diary, Part C. Vol. VIII), the following possibilities are open to us:

1. Reject the Swedish note as not being based on international law and extend the German Sound minefield up to the three mile limit.

CONFIDENTIAL

6 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

2. Meet the Swedish point of view half way by not extending the German minefield, but nevertheless request the Swedes to block their territorial waters at the southern exit of the Sound, including Kogrund Channel effectively themselves, by stressing Germany's very justifiable interests and the danger of enemy submarines breaking through.

But above all the three mile limit must in both cases only be acknowledged de jure.

Because political and strategic advantages are to be seen in the execution of the first alternative, the Foreign Office, in agreement with the Naval Staff has decided in favor of it. The necessary notification will follow as soon as possible.

Note: In this connection it should be noted that favorably disposed Swedish shipping and pilot circles have even said that the recognition of the four mile limit, not required by international law, **deprived Germany of** many advantages in her warfare against merchant shipping, and that this incomplete control of merchant shipping had left the Baltic Sea open to **contraband** shipping and British naval operations. - The Swedish press comments on the situation created by **Germany's refusal to recognize more than** the three mile limit, confined themselves to pointing out that by laying a new minefield up to the three mile limit the Falsterbo **passage** will even be impossible for ships of over 3.5 meter draught.

Special Reports on the Enemy 6 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Radio monitoring reported various accurate detections of convoy movements in the Gibraltar area, including a report of Indian troop transportations.

The battleship WARSPITE and two escorting destroyers were sighted off Cape St. Vincent making for the Channel ports.

France:

The cruiser ALGERIE and three submarines are proceeding from Casablanca to Toulon. They will be relieved off the coast of West Africa by the cruiser JEAN DE VIENNE and three other submarines.

CONFIDENTIAL

6 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

The enemy naval forces (GLASGOW, NEWCASTLE, and destroyers) reported on 2 and 3 Nov. in the area southwest of Norway, put into a harbor in the Rosyth area on 5 Nov.

Submarine U "21" reported an enemy submarine at the Dogger Bank. According to Radio Monitoring Service, the Commanding Admiral, Home Fleet; the Commanding Admiral of the 1st Battle Cruiser Squadron; the Commanding Admiral of the 2nd Cruiser Flotilla; and the cruiser EDINBURGH were not in Scapa Flow on 7 Nov.; they were probably at sea off Northern Scotland.

Own Situation 6 Nov.

Atlantic:)
North Sea:) Nothing to report.

Baltic Sea:

The warfare against merchant shipping continued in the northern part of the Baltic Sea with the minelayers TANNENBERG and HANSESTADT DANZIG; in the Kattegat with the 11th Submarine Chaser Flotilla; and south of Flint Channel with the 15th Patrol Boat Flotilla.

The Air Force General Staff reported as follows:

The reconnaissance off Calais of a plane of the 122nd Reconnaissance Group was broken off at 8000 meters owing to the icing up of the oxygen masks.

Between 0615 and 0700 seven planes of the 122nd Reconnaissance Group took off for a reconnaissance of the North Sea (in search of a convoy).

English Channel Transportations:

The heavy British transport activity which has been observed in the eastern part of the Channel since 10 Oct. 1939 continues. The same state of affairs was also observed in the central and western parts of the Channel. We have thus been able to confirm that these **transport**s are connected with the transfer of the second wave of the British Expeditionary Force to France.

6 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Ports of Embarkation.

In addition to the British south coast ports, London (Tilbury Docks) and also the Bristol Channel ports, especially Cardiff and Barry, are engaged in the transport of material.

Ports of Disembarkation.

Dunkirk is the main port of disembarkation in the eastern part of the Channel. Since 10 Oct., four troop transports have on the average put in there daily loaded with troops and material. Smaller ports have also been used. British troops have for instance been repeatedly disembarked at Fécamp and St. Valéry.

It was noticed that Lorient was being used for the first time as a port of disembarkation for Western France. Presumably, this port will only be used when there are **bottlenecks** at St. Nazaire and Nantes.

It is assumed that troop transport are being also carried out by individually routed ships such as small fast Channel steamers, especially in the eastern part of the Channel. Their time of departure is so arranged that the transports are outside their ports of destination before dawn (between 0400 and 0700).

Submarine Situation 6 Nov.

Atlantic:

Submarine U "43" is leaving for the Atlantic operational area.

North Sea:

Nothing to report.

Merchant Shipping.

One steamer has returned from overseas via Norway. There are now still fourteen more homeward-bound ships; 267 of them are still lying in neutral harbors.

CONFIDENTIAL

6 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

A **Contraband** Bureau has been established within the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs headed by an admiral. (See Part B, Vol. V, page 45).

Teletype (top secret) to Group West: "Conference on recognition signals for submarines will take place according to plan as per 3/Skl Gkdos. 3603. Skl. 722 Gkdos."

7 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance.

Special Items:

1. King Leopold of the Belgians is conferring at the Hague with the Queen of the Netherlands; they are both accompanied by their Foreign Ministers. They have dispatched a joint telegram to the German, British, and French heads of state, offering the services of the Netherlands and Belgium for peace negotiations. (Nothing is expected to transpire from this step).

2. In connection with the law of neutrality, President Roosevelt has made a proclamation declaring a certain part of European waters a war zone forbidden to American shipping.

According to recent reports, this war zone starts off the Spanish coast, runs out to 45° N, 20° W; from there north up to 58° N, and then via 62° N, 2° E and 60° N, 5° E to the Norwegian coast (according to this, Bergen is outside the area). An official text has not yet been submitted.

The announcement of such a war zone keeping American merchant shipping away from the main operational areas of German naval warfare around Britain and France is very much welcomed by the Naval Staff as it means that we can afford to intensify our merchant shipping warfare against Britain under political conditions very favorable to ourselves as none of these measures need lead to clashes with the United States.

Possibilities for circumventing the law of neutrality will still remain; it has already been learned that nine ships of the "United States Lines" have been entered in the Panama register. They can thus touch British, French, and Irish ports despite the neutrality law.

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. Return of the DEUTSCHLAND:

The Chief, Operations Branch reported on the further orders and directives which had to be issued to the pocket battleship, to the Groups, and to the Commander, Submarines:

CONFIDENTIAL

7 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Until the transmission of a special short radio signal, before passing through the channel between the Shetlands and Norway, the DEUTSCHLAND will be under the command of the Naval Staff, then of Group West, and after passing Skagen of Group East. The naval forces of the Commanding Admiral, West are to lie in readiness so that they can put out immediately in the event of an emergency. The destroyers are to set out to take the DEUTSCHLAND under escort on receipt of her radio message. The rendezvous is planned to take place at approximately 58° N at dawn. Air reconnaissance is to be provided.

In the Kattegat and the Great Belt submarine ~~chase~~ is to be reinforced by forces of Group East.

(For orders see Part C, Vol. I: Atlantic).

2. Report based on a directive from Group B that the Army's operations should be supported by North Sea naval warfare Nr. 219/39 A I Chfs. dated 5 Nov. 1939. The Chief, Naval Staff agreed in principle with the rough plan made of the operation. In agreement with Group West, considerable doubts are only raised about using aerial mines which should only be used in times of great emergency and when there are no other alternatives. All the precautions planned can be executed one at a time by using special code words. In no event are any naval measures to be carried out before the start of the army's operations.

Conference of the Chiefs of Branches with the Commander-in-Chief, Navy.

The Commander-in-Chief, Navy made a survey of the situation and took the following point of view towards certain questions of expansion and organization:

1. It had been planned to expand the Navy to a size to be reached by 1944 - 1945. The outbreak of war in Sept. 1939 was, therefore, far too premature for the Navy, because the expansion and technical development of the fleet had by no means been completed - though this has been partly counterbalanced by the Air Force - for instance the reliability of the naval forces in action, especially of the modern groups, is still unsatisfactory at times, but these difficulties will simply have to be overcome by intensive training. And despite these difficulties and despite its weakness in numbers, the Navy has to date been able to carry out all the tasks assigned to it in an entirely satisfactory manner.

2. The establishment of Group East and later also of Group West, - the effects of the establishment of Group West on the preparations of the Fleet Command, are all reasons for making changes in the holders of the key positions.

CONFIDENTIAL

7 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

(See also the orders issued by the Commander-in-Chief, Navy dated 18 Oct. 1939, War Diary, Part B, Vol. V, page 46).

3. Problems of organization.

There are still bad gaps in the organization. The old decentralization had a very bad effect on the whole expansion of the Navy and on the execution of any special requests. Instead of decentralization the most closely knit centralization is indicated. The necessary changes towards this end have been ordered for 15 Nov. Bureau B will be abolished. One central bureau will be established by placing the Bureau of Naval Administration, Administrative Division and Medical Division under the same command. This will in no way reduce the responsibility of the subordinate chiefs of branches. On the contrary, the new organization aims at clearing up questions of responsibility.

A special staff attached to the Armed Forces High Command will be established for conducting the warfare against merchant shipping.

(For detailed records of the proceedings at the Conference of the Chiefs of Branches see: War Diary, Part B, Vol. V, page 47).

Special Reports on the Enemy 7 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Shipping Movements:

The AJAX put into Buenos Aires on 6 Nov.; the CARADOC passed through the Panama Canal making for Balbao.

On 7 Nov. radio monitoring reported the battleship RESOLUTION on escort duties off the west of Ireland. The Attaché in Madrid reported that numerous British steamers have been putting into Spanish ports under Irish colors.

France:

Radio monitoring reported air reconnaissance off Casablanca. A French flying boat is overdue.

Several French gunboats were reported off Vigo Bay. Armament: guns in the bow and stern plus anti-aircraft guns.

CONFIDENTIAL

7 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

Air reconnaissance detected enemy destroyers and submarines in the Hoofden. Fishing on a large-scale in progress south of Indefatigable Bank.

The Xth Air Corps's reconnaissance in the northern part of the North Sea revealed no convoy traffic. But a group of seven or eight cruisers was reported in Muckle Roe Bay (west coast of the Shetlands). It is quite possible that the enemy is using this bay as a base for the ships of the Northern Patrol.

Air reconnaissance did not confirm an agent's report that an iron ore convoy had put out from Bergen.

The consul in Haugesund reported that on 2 Nov. a British ARETHUSA class cruiser had attempted to stop the prize CITY OF FLINT within territorial waters. According to Norwegian reports, in addition to light naval forces, four British cruisers were sighted off Stadlandet on 3 Nov.

Own Situation 7 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

North Sea:

The armed reconnaissance of the Commander, Air Force, West sighted several destroyers sailing in two groups east of the Wash which were attacked with torpedoes and bombs. Results were not observed. The destroyers flashed the letters BD (British Destroyer) to the planes. In the southern part of the Hoofden another destroyer with a fairly large submarine was sighted and unsuccessfully attacked.

Baltic Sea:

Warfare Against Merchant Shipping:

The operations of patrol boats at Virago Ground and Lille Ground have been so far without result. There has only been shipping traffic within territorial waters. Recent observations elicited that the Falsterbo fairway inside the three mile limit appears to be navigable for all steamers of medium tonnage which normally sail the Baltic Sea. The traffic observations in Kogrund Channel have not yet been completed. A permanent patrol and reconnaissance service has been established off Falsterbo and

CONFIDENTIAL

7 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Virago Ground.

The HANSESTADT DANZIG has up to date captured ten steamers in the warfare against merchant shipping in the northern part of the Baltic Sea.

Danzig Bay: Minesweeping operations have been continued.

Minefields in the Baltic Sea Entrances:

Numerous mines have broken loose and are drifting off the east coast of Zeeland as a result of the recent period of bad weather.

(Between Kastrup and Cape Stevns alone, 70 mines are said to have been washed up. The Danes are establishing mine warning stations and a minesweeping service).

The dispatch of an expert from the Minelaying Experimental Command to investigate the cause and to identify the types of mines involved has been arranged.

Submarine Situation 7 Nov.

Atlantic:

Submarine U "41" put out for the operational area.

Submarine U "46" put into Kiel from **operations**

Tonnage sunk: 5,000 tons (of ten torpedoes six were failures!!)

Submarines U "26" and U "53" are still in the operational area. No news of submarines U "40", U "42", U "45".

Outward bound: Submarine U "33" is southeast of Ireland for a special operation in the Bristol Channel. Submarine U "43" is in the central part of the North Sea.

Homeward bound: Submarines U "25", U "34", U "37".

North Sea:

In the operational area:

Submarines U "56", U "60", U "61".

7 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Homeward bound:

Submarines U "23", U "58", U "59".

Back from a special operation: Submarine U "21".

For the merchant tonnage sunk to date (in so far as detected by Radio Monitoring Service) see Part B, Vol. V, page 48).

Merchant Shipping 7 Nov.

One steamer has returned from overseas. Two steamers proceeded from overseas to Norway. On 7 Nov. the 22,300 ton HAPAG steamer NEW YORK coming from Murmansk left Haugesund homeward bound.

The German ore shipping to Norway will now be running with ten ships. Unfortunately the steamers have so far left for Norway with no cargoes. The Naval Staff feels that every effort must be made to increase the German coal export to Norway which is at present almost entirely monopolized by Great Britain.

Dispatch of teletype to Group West for Skl 722 Gkdos. dated 6 Nov. Top Priority.

"Serial number is to be 3/Skl Gkdos. 4203"

Skl 745/39 Gkdos.

(was confirmed at Group West at 1937 hours).

CONFIDENTIAL

8 Nov. 1939
1100 hours

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. As regards the various considerations which were submitted to the Naval Staff by the Ministry of Transportation about recalling the BREMEN, the Chief, Naval Staff stated that not under any circumstances was the BREMEN to leave Murmansk for home waters unless she had direct permission from the Naval Staff. This is a very necessary arrangement as only the Naval Staff by reason of the survey it has of the situation in the North Sea operational area, is in the position to determine the most favorable moment for the BREMEN to undertake such an operation.
2. The Chief, Naval Staff declared that the number of our submarines was to be kept top secret. The numbers of the new boats about to be launched are to be so arranged that they give no clue to their total number.
3. From the reports received from the Naval Attaché in Tokyo, Captain Lietzmann, (see also the War Diary of the Naval Attaché) it is quite clear that Japan does not intend to enter the war. Whilst after the conclusion of the Russo-German pact the general feeling in political circles and amongst the Japanese population was against Germany, with the realization of the advantages that Japan may be able to derive, the situation is now being judged more calmly and the desire to approach Germany again is unmistakably manifesting itself. The Japanese Navy has always shown the greatest understanding for Germany's position and has on numerous occasions made every effort to maintain the former cordial relations which have always prevailed with the German Navy. The German Naval Attaché has been assured that the Japanese Navy would be ready to help Germany in every way. Germany has only to state her desires.

Given such circumstances it should be possible for Germany to make the following requests to the Japanese Navy:

1. Fitting out and supplying auxiliary vessels in Japanese ports.
2. Making ports or hide-outs available to German warships and auxiliary vessels for overhauling, supplying and fitting out.
3. Purchasing Japanese submarines.

The Fuehrer's approval will have to be obtained for these requests.

CONFIDENTIAL

8 Nov. 1939
1230 hours

CONFIDENTIAL

Telephone call from the Chief, Fleet Operations Section to Group West (Chief of Operations) that the serial number in Gkdos. teletype 745 dated 6 Nov. has been incorrectly transmitted and is to be changed to 4503.

Afternoon.

There was a conference in the Foreign Office (Ambassador Dr. Ritter) on the black lists with representatives of the Operations Division, Naval Staff. The attitude of the Foreign Office to the question of the introduction of transit passes proved to be very important and revealing. At present, the Foreign Office is not interested in introducing transit passes because in connection with the Baltic States, for instance, it would interfere with its plans for economic warfare there. Generally speaking the Foreign Office very much doubts the efficacy of transit passes in as much as it considers all declarations guaranteeing the whereabouts of merchandize in neutral countries as very unreliable, regardless of who the issuing or certifying authority may be. On the contrary, the Foreign Office's attitude was rather that transit passes would only be useful in cases where certain quantities of contraband would have been released for trading with the enemy by special agreement. (for instance: the Danish ~~food~~ agreement).

As the further development of German measures for economic warfare cannot as yet be foreseen, the Naval Staff is of the opinion that all the necessary preparations for the introduction of the transit passes should nevertheless be made now by the Operations Division and the Intelligence Division.

Special Reports on the Enemy 8 Nov.

Atlantic:

England:

Radio intelligence has already located convoy HX 7 which put out from Halifax on 2 Nov. in the western entrance to the Channel. The RESOLUTION is escorting the convoy. The convoy must have crossed the Atlantic at an average speed of 14 knots. Important Canadian **transports** of troops and material are probably involved.

Radio monitoring evaluations reveal that Task Force X consisting of three unknown British vessels, probably including the ROYAL SOVEREIGN, the aircraft carrier HERMES as well as the flotilla

CONFIDENTIAL

8 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

leader TERRIBLE and the FANTASQUE, put into Dakar on 25 Oct.

In view of the possible withdrawal of the GRAF SPEE to the Indian Ocean, the pocket battleship has been supplied with the following information:

1. Presumed in the Indian Ocean:

Aden-Bombay: MALAYA, GLORIOUS, two destroyers.

Colombo area: EAGLE, CORNWALL?, LIVERPOOL, MANCHESTER, GLOUCESTER.

Moreover, a few vessels of the Australian and East Asia stations such as auxiliary cruisers are often there.

2. The AJAX was in Buenos Aires on 6 Nov.

The CARADOC sailed from Colon to Balboa.

The SURCOUF was in the Lobito area.

France:

According to radio monitoring reports unidentified vessels are assembling off Cape Verde.

North Sea:

Radio bearings located unidentified vessels in the direction of Utsire and north of Borkum. The last bearing must be of an enemy submarine.

On the evening of 7 Nov. Radio Monitoring Service located the destroyer COSSACK seriously damaged in the Rosyth area. She presumably struck a mine. The destroyer will be towed in.

Churchill announced in the House of Commons the loss of the submarine OXELEY which occurred quite a time ago.

Own Situation 8 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

CONFIDENTIAL

8 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

Owing to bad weather conditions (southwesterly gale), no surface forces were out on operations. The planned destroyer operation was cancelled.

Air reconnaissance in the southern part of the North Sea sighted a convoy of 17 steamers and six destroyers off the Wash and a gunboat off Smith Knoll, which was unsuccessfully attacked.

Enemy air activity was detected in the Hoofden at various times.

One He 115 was lost in air combats. There was a submarine chase of a submarine located off Borkum.

Baltic Sea:

The Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic was ordered to take all precautions for the safe arrival of the HAPAG steamer NEW YORK. Submarine escorts in the Kattegat will be provided by minesweepers and planes.

Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

In the eastern part of the Baltic Sea minelayers supported by planes have had no results. The planes have only located ships in ballast. A Swedish steamer was seized in the Sound.

Submarine Situation:

Atlantic:

Submarine U "37" will be putting into Wilhelmshaven from **operations**. She has sunk 35,000 tons.

Submarine U "28" will be putting out for the Atlantic operational area. Otherwise nothing to report.

North Sea:

Only submarines U "60" and U "61" are still in the operational area off the Norwegian coast. The other boats are homeward bound.

CONFIDENTIAL

8 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

The prize CITY OF FLINT has landed contraband in Bergen. The cargo has thus been definitely withdrawn from German control.

As for the area of European waters which has been declared a war zone by America, this is a move very favorable to German naval warfare as it means that American ships will **hereafter** be forbidden to sail British and French waters. As regards the very poor chance of recapturing the CITY OF FLINT with the few submarines available in the northern part of the North Sea, it would appear advisable to avoid undesirable complications with America by informing the American Government that Germany will consent to the ship's return to America. The Foreign Office was informed of the Naval Staff's attitude. The Commander, Submarines has been instructed to order the submarines not to attack the ship. (See also Part C, Vol. VIII).

Merchant Shipping 8 Nov.

Own Shipping:

According to Radio Daventry, the German 7,603 ton steamer UHLENFELS was captured by the aircraft carrier ARK ROYAL on 8 Nov. and brought into Freetown.

The Asiatic Tanker Co. intends to let the four ships of the Woermann Line lie at anchor in Portuguese Angola.

The Embassy in Washington made the following report:

"At the urgent request of American shipping companies interested in purchasing German ships laid up in Spanish American ports, the American Government entered into negotiations with the British Government to obtain the British Admiralty's recognition of the transfer of ownership and the change of flag. The British Government is said to have made a binding promise to the American Government that it will acknowledge the transfer of German merchantmen to American owners and will not subject the ships to any of the measures being taken in the warfare against merchant shipping provided that the American Government pledges the buyer to hand over these ships at any time at the British Government's request which will in exchange refund the German purchase price to the American owners. The American Government is said to have agreed to this..

CONFIDENTIAL

8 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

There are indications that certain Spanish-American states are also conducting negotiations of a similar nature with the British Government and have accepted the British conditions."

According to information sent from a Belgian firm to Hamburg, the Portuguese Government has entered into negotiations to purchase German ships lying in Portuguese ports. The Belgian firm assumes that the British know all about these negotiations.

Neutral Shipping:

The Foreign Office made the following report on 6 Nov.:

"On 6 Nov. the London press demanded that German exports on neutral ships be blockaded." It is said that the correspondents of neutral countries would like to know whether the British Government had already considered taking such measures and had thought them justified, because in the warfare against merchant shipping Germany has been sinking British and neutral ships quite indiscriminately, without even making sure of the safety of the ships' complements. According to a London press report dated 3 Nov., the British Ministry of Economic Warfare will make a statement on this matter.

The Foreign Office pointed out in connection with this that should Great Britain enforce these precautions she will prejudice the promises she has made to the United States, Japan, and Iran.

The news of Latvian food deliveries via Sweden to Britain shows it is only possible to hold them up in the Gulf of Finland.

CONFIDENTIAL

9 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance.

1. On the evening of 8 Nov. there was a bomb plot in the Munich Buergerbraeu cellar after the Fuehrer's speech in commemoration of 9 Nov.
2. For Chamberlain's speech in the House of Commons see foreign press reports.
3. Belgium and the Netherlands: Fear of a German invasion is steadily increasing. Partial flooding has been ordered in the Netherlands. All leave has been cancelled. Troop movements on a large-scale have also been reported from Belgium. All the canals have been closed to shipping, and also some in the Netherlands.

The Dutch-Belgian peace petition has but very slight chances of success.

4. The Foreign Office urgently requested that American ships be treated with the utmost consideration in order to avoid all possible occasion for tension with the United States at the present moment.

It can be seen from the bills of lading which are being continuously submitted by Danish ships bound for England, that considerable supplies are going to England which, in accordance with the Danish-German special agreement, are exempted from seizure under prize law. According to recent information from Great Britain, these supplies must be of vital importance to the enemy. In a letter to the Foreign Office, the Naval Staff again mentioned the serious doubts it had raised some time ago and requested that investigations into the following points be reopened:

1. Whether the cancellation of the agreement would cause greater difficulties to the enemy than to Germany.
2. Whether Denmark has in the meantime been able to discover fresh sources of cattle food supplies other than in Britain.
3. Whether Germany still depends on Denmark for its supplies.

Forenoon

The Russian Commissariat for Foreign Affairs verbally announced that certain waters in the approaches to Kola Bay had been mined.
(For details see Part C, Vol. VIII).

CONFIDENTIAL

9 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Special Reports on the Enemy 9 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Radio monitoring detected:

The cruisers CUMBERLAND, EXETER, ACHILLES in the South Atlantic, the cruisers SUSSEX, SHROPSHIRE in the area of South Africa. (Transmitted to GRAF SPEE).

The cruiser ENTERPRISE in the western outlet of the Channel is in contact with the battleship WARSPITE and the cruiser EFFINGHAM.

According to a report from the Naval Attaché, the cruiser AJAX put out from Buenos Aires on 8 Nov.

On 7 Nov. three DEVONSHIRE-class cruisers put into Gibraltar coming from the east. The cruisers are camouflaged. They are presumably the DEVONSHIRE, the SUFFOLK, and the NORFOLK. The future plans of these cruisers are still unknown, probably escort duties in the North Atlantic.

(To be transmitted to the pocket battleships).

France:

Radio intelligence detected convoy movements.

North Sea:

On the afternoon of 9 Nov. radio bearings detected a "C" class cruiser north of the Dogger Bank.

The bearing of the Commander of the 5th Destroyer Flotilla was taken 200 miles north of the Shetlands (probably on escort duty).

According to an agent's report, one aircraft carrier is stationed at Kirkwall (it can only be the PEGASUS).

The British Admiralty announced that the southern channel south of Inshkeith in the Firth of Forth has been closed to shipping. Furthermore, all ships have been requested to make enquiries before passing to the south of the Newcastle parallel.

These precautions are a clear indication of the difficulties which the minefield menace make for the enemy.

CONFIDENTIAL

9 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

According to a Radio Daventry report, on 9 Nov. another steamer, the CARMARTHEN COAST struck a mine off the northeast coast of England.

Own Situation:

Atlantic:)
North Sea:) Nothing to report.

Baltic Sea:

Western Part of the Baltic Sea:

Group East reports the completion of the net barrage off Kiel-Friedrichsort.

The steamer NEW YORK was brought in with an anti-submarine escort of minesweepers and planes.

Warfare against merchant shipping continued. (One Swedish steamer was seized).

Danzig Bay:

Minesweeping operations were continued.

Minefield measures:

In certain Swedish shipping and pilot circles the present position of the German minefield in the Sound is considered to be far too generous an acknowledgement of the Swedish demands, as demonstrated by its inadequacy as an effective means of controlling the shipping. A control could be far more easily exercised if the minefield were extended to the three mile limit.

Submarine Situation.

Atlantic:

Submarine U "49" put out for the Atlantic operational area. Submarines U "26" and U "53" are now presumed to be in the Mediterranean operational area.

CONFIDENTIAL

9 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Submarine U "42" (Commander: Lieutenant (s.g.) Dau) has been declared missing and presumed lost as from 9 Nov. According to a letter from a member of the crew, part of the crew was taken prisoner. The boat is said to have been damaged and sunk in an engagement with destroyers.

North Sea:

Submarine U "23" has returned from a war cruise.

Submarines U "56", U "58", U "59" have returned from their operational area off the Orkneys.

Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

Commander, Submarines' short report was about the operation of submarine U "37":

Length of time: 5 Oct. to 8 Nov. Results: 35,305 tons sunk, including a "Q" ship. Route: northwards **around the British Isles**. Operational area: southwest of Ireland and west of Gibraltar. Very little traffic north of England and west of Ireland. Convoy met on 17/18 Oct. at 45° N and 12° 30' W. Individually routed ships off Gibraltar. Hydrophone hunting, depth charges, co-operation of "Q" ships with PT boats. Moderately heavy air patrols south of Portugal.

Radio Daventry transmitted a false report stating that the French steamer SAN JOSE had been chased by an enemy submarine 500 miles southeast of the Bermudas. This is the third report of this kind issued for a specific purpose, in this case evidently to be able to ascribe naval actions within the American zone of security to Germany.

Merchant Shipping.

The following coded Weather Report No. 22 has been transmitted to German merchant shipping:

1. Two British submarines in position off Andenes (Norway).

CONFIDENTIAL

9 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

2. The chances of breaking through are still good in view of the darkness and the drizzle in the narrows. The enemy has not violated Norwegian territorial waters up to now. The following report has been received from America:

The Standard Oil Co., New Jersey, has placed six tankers under the Panama flag and nine more are to follow suit. There are a number of British and French ships in New York ready to load war material. American and British shipping companies are said to have managed to circumvent the neutrality regulations by coming to an agreement by which the Americans will take over French and British South American shipping traffic thus enabling the British who used to sail to South America to concentrate entirely on the Atlantic.

The Dutch allegedly turned down for defense reasons the German proposal that Dutch pilots should bring German merchantmen from Rotterdam and Amsterdam through the Wadden Zee and out into the North Sea between the islands of Terschelling and Vlieland. To this, the Naval Attaché pointed out that the Dutch themselves cannot pass through the Seegat with their ships. In the first days of the war they laid mines there and laid them very hastily and not according to regulations so that the Dutch themselves no longer know where they lie. It is said that the Dutch Navy plans to sweep the minefield in the near future and then to lay it out afresh leaving a passage through it. Once this has been done, the Naval Attaché thinks that the Dutch will return to the proposal broached by Germany.

According to a report from the Naval Attaché in Helsinki, large quantities of wood, especially pit props, are at the moment being transported via Northern Finland to Narvik. Vast Finnish shipments of cellulose to the Netherlands and Belgium are said to have been taking place recently, their final destination was probably England.

It will be transmitted to the pocket battleship DEUTSCHLAND that the Danish fishery protection vessel ISLANDS FALK is scheduled to leave the Faroes on 10 Nov. for Bergen.

The operational readiness report from Group West stated that the following vessels were out of operational readiness at the moment:

Cruiser HIPPER	until 31 Dec.
" LEIPZIG	uncertain
" KOELN	until 19 Nov.

9 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Destroyer LEBERECHT **MAASS** until 15 Nov.
" MAX SCHULTZ until 4 Jan. 1940
" RICH. BEITZEN until 10 Nov.
" ERICH STEINBRINK until 10 Nov.
" BERND VON ARNIM until 14 Nov.
" WOLFGANG ZENKER until 9 Dec.
" HANS LODY until 12 Nov.
" PAUL JACOBI until 22 Nov.
5th Torpedo Boat Flotilla until 15 Feb. 1940

The Naval Staff sent the following statement to the Foreign Office on the question of completely blocking the western part of the Baltic Sea against enemy submarines penetrations:

"According to reports submitted by German naval forces to the Naval Staff, several enemy submarines succeeded in penetrating into the western part of the Baltic Sea and slipping out again. The grave danger which they constitute for the heavy German naval forces carrying out exercises in the Baltic Sea and also for all the merchant shipping can no longer be tolerated. Having examined all the possibilities, the Naval Staff came to the conclusion that the only way to prevent enemy submarines from penetrating into the Baltic Sea would be by laying both a net and a mine barrage reaching from the sea bed to the surface in the Little and Great Belts including Danish territorial waters. To enable normal merchant shipping and German naval forces to continue passing through the straits, there will have to be channels in the minefield. These channels will have to lie in open waters to give German patrols the necessary freedom of action to enable them to attack enemy submarines that may nevertheless try to break through.

To avoid political reactions of a nature which might result in the British demanding the mining of Norwegian territorial waters, we must try and make the Danes lay the minefields which we consider necessary on their own initiative."

It would be advisable to let the Naval Attaché in Copenhagen contact the Danes on this matter. The Foreign Office will be requested to give political support to the Naval Attaché in the execution of his instructions.

The Foreign Office agreed with the Naval Staff in principle and requested that the question should first be discussed between the Danish and German Navies via the Naval Attaché. On 10 Nov. the Naval Attaché will be present at discussions in Berlin.

The Operations Officer, Group West was informed by telephone that the first two numbers of the serial number of the teletype 745 Gkdos. should be 57 (key word issue).

9 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The pocket battleship DEUTSCHLAND (with copy to the GRAF SPEE) received the following orders by Radiogram 1539.

"Only touch Base North if in danger. Intentions must still be reported to Naval Staff in advance."

The course through the Great Belt and the position of the declared area in the **Gjedser strait** were transmitted to the DEUTSCHLAND and the WESTERWALD in subsequent teletypes.

CONFIDENTIAL

10 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Special Reports on the Enemy 10 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

The 1st Cruiser Squadron (DEVONSHIRE, NORFOLK, and SUFFOLK) are on their way to the Channel area. Likewise the battle cruiser HOOD was also detected in the Channel.

(Transmitted to pocket battleships).

The Naval Attaché in Buenos Aires reported the positions of the following ships:

Cruiser CUMBERLAND	Buenos Aires
" EXETER	Mar del Plata
" AJAX	Rio de Janeiro
with one auxiliary cruiser	

(Transmitted to pocket battleships)

In the Indian Ocean the battleship MALAYA and the aircraft carrier GLORIOUS left Aden on 10 Nov.

(Transmitted to pocket battleships)

France:

Convoy activity was observed in the western part of the Channel. The cruiser JEAN DE VIENNE escorted by two flotilla leaders was detected proceeding from Casablanca to Dakar.

Three ships, presumably the cruisers ALGERIE and DUQUAY-TROUIN and the 10th Flotilla Leader Division were lying off the Cape Verde Islands.

North Sea:

The British Admiralty announced the loss of the auxiliary vessel NORTHERN ROVER. It is presumably, the patrol vessel which was torpedoed by submarine U "59" off the Orkneys.

Air reconnaissance along the coast on 10 Nov. revealed no enemy forces except one gunboat and one destroyer off the Wash. The Xth Air Force's reconnaissance did not reveal any enemy forces either. The Firth of Forth was empty; in the bases in the Shetlands there were only a few light naval forces; owing to weather conditions Scapa Flow and the Moray Firth could not be surveyed.

10 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Radio intelligence detected the usual patrol activities in the area of Scotland.

According to British reports, lights have been extinguished from IJmuiden to the north.

Own Situation 10 Nov.

Atlantic:

For a survey of the situation in the Atlantic on 10 Nov. see War Diary, Part C, Vol. 1, Atlantic.

North Sea:

Nothing to report.

Baltic Sea:

Warfare against merchant shipping north of the Sound minefield led to the capture of two steamers. Mine-sweeping operations in Danzig Bay are being continued.

Submarine Situation.

Atlantic:

Submarine U "33" reported the completion of her assignment in the Bristol Channel. Otherwise nothing to report.

North Sea:

Nothing to report.

The German representative in Panama reported that as a result of the Pan-American neutrality declaration, the Panama Government has prohibited the submarines of belligerent nations to enter the territorial waters except in cases of serious sea or battle damage.

CONFIDENTIAL

10 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Merchant Shipping 10 Nov.

Own Shipping:

The 22,337 GRT Hapag steamer NEW YORK put into Holtenau from Murmansk. The Naval Staff has requested the Ministry of Transportation to effect the early transfer of this ship to an easterly port in order to avoid heavy concentrations of shipping in threatened Kiel.

Six German steamers put out from Vigo homeward bound (see also Merchant Shipping Situation 11 Nov.)

Trade with Denmark:

The Danish Foreign Trade Bureau was informed that during the first weeks of September Britain only met 42 to 45 per cent of her coal and coke exports to Denmark; in the second half of September, however, substantial deliveries arrived so that

Britain succeeded in meeting the quota of 80 per cent coal and 65 per cent coke of the total Danish importations of these commodities as laid down in the Anglo-Danish commercial treaty of 1935. In this connection it was pointed out that as Germany has recently been again permitting the unrestricted exportation of agricultural products to Britain, very little hope of being able to expand German-Danish trade to any appreciable extent can be held out for the present.

The British press is again demanding the extension of the British blockade to embrace German exports on neutral ships. The matter is arousing ever increasing interest in the British parliament and press as it is felt that the British Government should adopt far stronger measures. The maintenance of German overseas exports is of primary importance if the German plan to blockade Britain is to succeed, for if Germany were unable to offer overseas products to the neutrals, she would also be unable to supply them with substitutes for their British trade losses.

Dutch sources of information have confirmed recent reports of the increasing lack of pit props in British mines which is beginning to have a disastrous effect on British coal output. It is estimated in British mining circles that the present stock of pit props cannot last for more than four months. Only very small quantities can be expected from France. Canada is too far away and moreover from December to April she would only be able to ship wood via Vancouver. Therefore British wood requirements seem to be presenting an insoluble problem.

10 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

This information confirms how imperative it is for the Naval Staff to take the most severe and ruthless measures against British wood imports. The Commander, Submarines plans to send out submarine U "36" within the next few days for warfare against merchant shipping off the northern part of the Norwegian coast. The groups have been ordered to exploit all possibilities in our effort to achieve the suspension of British wood imports.

Afternoon

Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy to the Fuehrer.

(See minutes of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy, dated 10 Nov. War Diary, Part C, Vol. VII).

Points discussed:

1. Situation in the Baltic and the North Sea.
2. Minelaying operations off the British coast.
3. Further intensification of the warfare against merchant shipping.
4. Economic and military exchange negotiations with Italy, Russia, and Japan.
5. The CITY OF FLINT affair.
6. The situation concerning the DEUTSCHLAND and the GRAF SPEE.
7. Bases on the Dutch and Belgian coasts.

Discussion with the Naval Attaché in Copenhagen (Captain Henning) at the Operations Division on the precautions planned by the Naval Staff for the defense of the Baltic Sea Entrances (see War Diary, Part C, Vol. III, Baltic Sea).

CONFIDENTIAL

11 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance.

1. It has been reported from the Netherlands that a German invasion of Belgium and the Netherlands has been seriously anticipated since 7 Nov. The necessary preliminaries to flooding are said to have been completed. Certain precautions have been taken in Rotterdam harbor; some ships have even been moved including German ships of the Neptune Shipping Company.
2. Russo-Finnish negotiations have still not yielded any results.
3. The Danish plan for concerted action against the contraband lists failed owing to Swedish opposition, which feared that the economic negotiations now in progress with Great Britain might be jeopardized.
4. For Churchill's statements on naval warfare in the House of Commons see "Foreign Press Reports No. 514." Great Britain has now definitely gained the upper hand over German submarine warfare. From the fourth to the eighth week of the war the British Merchant Fleet only lost 72,000 tons: that is to say less than half the losses suffered during the first four weeks of the war. Anti-submarine defenses have been considerably reinforced. Taken at a conservative estimate, German submarine losses are from two to four a week! German submarine construction is thought to amount to two boats per week. There should be approximately 100 German submarines by January 1940, excluding losses.

Conference with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items.

1. As a result of the conference with the Fuehrer on 10 Nov., all the necessary preliminary measures for the speedy sanctioning of the order to sink enemy passenger steamers without warning are to be carried out as soon as possible. This intensification is to be prefaced by judiciously prepared propaganda in the form of press reports on the fact that enemy passenger steamers are armed and are being used as auxiliary cruisers.

In compliance with the Fuehrer's wishes, the further intensification of the warfare against merchant shipping is not to be publicly announced, but simply reported, event by event, at the time of occurrence.

CONFIDENTIAL

11 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

As a further intensification, the Chief, Operations Division proposed sinking without warning all tankers obviously bound for Britain or France or coming from there. The Chief, Naval Staff concurred. This proposal will be put to the Fuehrer in connection with yesterday's discussions. But the permission to sink will only come into question within the American war zone round Britain and France. Further investigations into these measures are to be made at once.

2. The directive of the Armed Forces High Command about naval warfare in support of military strategy contains the following basic decisions:

a. The Navy is not to launch any attacks before the Army does.

b. Naval attacks against Holland will only be permitted should it be occupied by British or French troops or take up armed resistance against German military measures.

c. Submarine operations against Belgian ports are to be sanctioned the night before army operations are to begin. But surface forces and planes are only to go into operation after the Army has launched the attack.

d. The Dutch ports are only to be blocked on receipt of special orders; this also applies to the blocking of the Western Schelde because there would be the disadvantage of the approach to Antwerp still remaining open.

3. Report of the Chief, Operations Branch on the operational orders of the Commander, Submarines for the new wave of Atlantic submarines and for the operation planned for one submarine against the British ore and wood trade routes to Norway and Russia.

a. Submarine U "28" - minelaying off Swansea; submarine U "29" off Milford Haven, (the operation north of the foreland has already been carried out by submarine U "33"). All naval and merchant vessels may be attacked and sunk without warning. In accordance with prize regulations, warfare against merchant shipping may only be waged outside the North Sea. The boats are supplied with: 12 TMB mines, 3 G7e and 2 G7a torpedo tallies.

b. Submarines U "38", U "41", U "43", U "49", U "47": Warfare against merchant shipping between Ireland and Gibraltar. All enemy naval vessels are to be attacked (destroyers, only if there is precise firing data). Enemy merchantmen are to be sunk without warning as also all ships which are allowed to be sunk in accordance with the Standing Orders to Commanders issued by the Commander,

CONFIDENTIAL

11 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Submarines. Outside the North Sea, warfare against ships which are clearly neutral is to be in accordance with prize regulations. Operations against valuable targets are to take the form of directed attacks.

Submarines U "41", U "43", U "49" will first be in the "Yellow" operational area (southwest of Ireland), after meeting U "38" they will be in the "Blue" area (west and southwest of Portugal), and after meeting U "47", in the "Red" area (northwest of Cape Finisterre).

Tactical leader: Commander of U "43".

To avoid surprises, the Commander, Submarines has ordered that no intercepted steamer is to be boarded by members of the crew. In principle, the ships should only be sunk with torpedoes.

c. Submarine U "36" is to wage warfare against merchant shipping off the north and west coasts of Norway. Merchant shipping running from Narvik to England is to be attacked. Also enemy naval vessels (destroyers, only if there is precise firing data) and ships which are to be sunk without warning. Warfare against neutral ships is to be in accordance with prize regulations when the presence of a submarine is known and it is assumed that it is not a steamer engaged in the normal coastal traffic service. Whilst waiting to proceed to the North Cape area up to Kola Bay the waiting position is for the time being to be off West Fiord. Their appearance must be a surprise. Special attention is drawn to the Russian 12 mile zone of territorial waters!

(For further details see the operational orders of the Commander, Submarines Nos. 10, 11, 12. See file "Naval Warfare 1939," Vol. 4).

Special Reports on the Enemy 11 Nov.

Atlantic:

England:

Escort Duties:

The battleship WARSPITE which is in radio communication with the Bermudas, was obviously sent from the Channel to the west to escort a convoy.

The Naval Attaché in Buenos Aires reported the departure of the weekly La Plata convoy on 11/12 Nov. consisting of four large, fast, 16 knot, armed British meat vessels, one passenger steamer

CONFIDENTIAL

11 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

and approximately three steamers carrying grain.

According to the Italian Navy, Gibraltar convoys mostly consist of ships coming from Africa and South America, because the greatest part of British trade with East Asia and India now runs round the Cape.

Radio monitoring reported:

The netlayer PROTECTOR put into Freetown on 10 Nov. The commander of the 5th Cruiser Squadron (KENT, DORSETSHIRE, BIRMINGHAM) who has been in East Asia is now in Eastern India.

The pocket battleships received the following information about the enemy:

1. The cruiser MANCHESTER was off Mozambique at the end of September. Patrol duties off the South African ports by **sloops**. Brisk shipping traffic between Durban and Capetown.
2. The RENOWN and the ARK ROYAL probably left Freetown on 10 Nov.

France:

The fitting out of the battleship RICHELIEU is said to have reached the following stage: aircraft hangar not yet completed, heavy guns are being mounted, but the mounting of the medium guns has not yet been reported; the trial runs may begin in November, complement 1,800 men.

Radio intelligence detected the cruiser DUPLEIX with two other vessels proceeding from Port Etienne to Dakar. The following ships, including these, are at present off the west coast of Africa:

Gibraltar: Four destroyers on patrol duties.

Casablanca: Two torpedo boats, approximately five submarines.

Dakar Area: Two heavy and two light cruisers, approximately five destroyers and eight submarines.

Off the Lesser Antilles: Four submarines (Fort de France - Martinique).

North Sea:

Nothing to report.

CONFIDENTIAL

11 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Neutrals:

According to agents' reports, the U.S. Navy is considering building superstructures above the decks of the big passenger steamers in order to use them as mobile security islands for bomber squadron flights to Europe.

The U.S. destroyers sent out on patrol in search of German naval forces in the Atlantic are presumably to transmit their observations to the British!

For a survey of the activities of British and French units from 1 - 8 Nov. according to radio monitoring see Radio Monitoring Report No 10 (Part B, Vol. "Radio Monitoring Reports").

Special Observations:

England:

1. The distribution and activity of the British naval forces were determined by the convoy escort operations and the attempts to attack made by the German pocket battleships.

Escorts have generally speaking been greatly reinforced lately.

2. Of the heavy enemy naval forces, only the NELSON, the RODNEY, and possibly one more "R" class vessel are in Scottish or northern home waters at present. Battle cruisers are patrolling the Atlantic trade routes and those to the west of the Channel. Aircraft carriers have no longer been detected in the home area. A few of the cruisers of the Home Fleet were withdrawn for escort duties in the North Atlantic and in the western exit of the Channel, respectively.

3. Regular escorts (about every two days) have been established between Norway and Britain by light naval forces of the Home Fleet.

4. Anti-submarine patrols and action in the Channel area are being carried out, as before, in close collaboration with the French Navy.

5. It is now clear that British naval warfare is concentrating on the Atlantic. Convoys have a strong escort of heavy ships and cruisers over the greater part of the Atlantic route, and sometimes, in the case of particularly important transports, right up to their rendezvous in European waters with naval vessels. They are met by destroyers and cruisers. Their flank is covered by heavy ships.

11 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

6. The South Atlantic naval forces have been further reinforced. The main bases are Freetown and Dakar.

France:

1. No operational activities in the North Sea.
2. There is less convoy traffic on the France-West Coast of Africa shipping route than before. The convoys are covered by submarines in fixed positions and are directly escorted by cruisers and destroyers.
3. Operational reconnaissance and patrolling in the area from Dakar to the Cape Verde Islands is being carried out by cruisers and flotilla leaders in close collaboration with British naval forces from Freetown.
4. There is convoy activity in the Mediterranean.

Own Situation 11 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

For a compilation of the orders issued to the DEUTSCHLAND and the WESTERWALD see Part C, Vol. I Atlantic.

It is presumed that the DEUTSCHLAND will pass through Denmark Strait during the night of 11 Nov. according to plan.

North Sea:

Dense coastal fog has been handicapping the operations of our own surface forces.

Baltic Sea:

The warfare against merchant shipping has been leading to further captures of steamers.

According to Danish reports, blasting squads destroyed 60 mines in Fakse Bay and Kjoerge Bay between 5 and 7 Nov.; it is said there are still more drifting mines left.

11 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

This is why the Danish service between Copenhagen and Bernholm has been suspended and is to be substituted by an air service during the winter months.

Submarine Situation 11 Nov.

Mediterranean: Submarines U "26", U "53".

Atlantic: Submarine U "34" is returning from a war cruise.

Results: 26,094 tons sunk, including an armed patrol vessel. One prize vessel was brought in.

In the operational area: Submarines U "33", U "40" (?), U "45" (?).

Outward bound:

U "28" off the Shetlands
U "41" northwest of Scotland
U "43" west of Scotland
U "49" central part of the North Sea

Homeward bound:

U "25" central part of the North Sea.

North Sea:

In position: U "60", U "61".

Merchant Shipping 11 Nov.

The M. ILLER has returned from overseas via Murmansk. The steamer ASUNCION put out from Las Palmas on 10 Nov. and her position on 11 Nov. was transmitted to French vessels in the Atlantic.

In a discussion between the Naval Attaché in Stockholm and the Chief of the Swedish Naval Staff on 9 Nov. on the question of the three mile limit, the Chief of the Swedish Naval Staff quite saw the point of establishing a Swedish government control system

CONFIDENTIAL

11 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

with German transit passes. The proposal made by the Naval Attaché that the Swedes should themselves block the whole of the Swedish fairway northeast of our own Sound minefield and prevent any contraband abuses by enemy submarines or merchantmen by only having a small channel through it, was also agreed to by the Chief of the Swedish Naval Staff.

(For further details see also War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII).

CONFIDENTIAL

12 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. The Fuehrer has agreed in principle to sanctioning the sinking without warning of all tankers which are sailing beyond all doubt to Britain and France or coming from there. A directive will follow from the Armed Forces High Command in writing.

2. The Chief, Operations Branch made the following report on the preliminary reflections of the Naval Staff on plans for a battleship operation:

The Naval Staff considers the present moment very favorable for a short but large-scale battleship operation. Of the heavy British naval forces, only the NELSON, RODNEY, and probably one "R" class vessel are in Scottish waters or home waters at the moment. None of the British battleships now in home waters can sail at more than 23 knots so that our ships would not be directly endangered even though they are rather prone to engine trouble. But even if an enemy battle-cruiser were to appear, the risks would still be small. The operation is estimated to last 4 - 5 days.

Strategic aims of this operation: To put pressure on the enemy North Atlantic routes in the hope of creating a sharp diversion which would relieve the pocket battleship GRAF SPEE, and also to prevent the enemy from taking advantage of the respite provided by the fact that the pocket battleship DEUTSCHLAND is now returning to home waters to reduce the size of his North Atlantic patrol in order to rest and overhaul his forces or else to send further forces to the concentration in the South Atlantic.

The battleships' task will therefore be:

To scatter the enemy patrol in the area between the Faroes and Iceland, possible also in the Shetland Narrows and to endanger the enemy sea routes in the North Atlantic by pretending to penetrate into this area.

The Chief, Naval Staff has given his consent to this, provided the Commanding Admiral, West is of the opinion that the battleships are at present in sufficiently good working order to stand up to such an operation.

For further details see the Naval Staff's directive: AI Op. 368/39 Gkdos. Chfs. dated 13 Nov. 1939.

CONFIDENTIAL

12 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Special Reports on the Enemy 12 Nov.

Atlantic:

England:

Radio monitoring detected:

Cruiser CAPETOWN, submarine depot ship MAIDSTONE, 1 gunboat, 1 minesweeper, 100 miles west of Casablanca, course 245°, on 12 Nov.

The following vessels are now in the Freetown area, the center of the South Atlantic convoy organization:

RENOWN, ARK ROYAL since 19 Oct., (put out on 10 Nov.)
HERMES since 30 Oct.
ALBATROS since the outbreak of war.
NEPTUNE since 19 Oct.
5 "H"-class destroyers.
netlayer PROTECTOR since 11 Nov.
auxiliary cruiser SALOPIAN since 10 Nov.
2 submarines (CLYDE and SEVERN).

France:

The movements and positions of a few convoys have been found out from various radio messages from the French Admiralty in Paris. The convoys seem to be sailing with very few light escorts.

The cruiser DUPLEIX with the MILAN and BASQUE put into Dakar on 12 Nov. (Transmitted to the pocket battleships).

North Sea:

- On 12 Nov. "D" class cruisers were on duty with the Northern Patrol.

The movements of the 2nd Cruiser Squadron were observed in the Rosyth area.

Light naval forces are proceeding from the western outlet of the Channel to Harwich.

The efficiency of German minefields off the Humber is coming more and more to light. The positions of two dangerous wrecks were announced.

CONFIDENTIAL

12 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

A further steamer sent out SOS signal northwest of the light-vessel. The British steamer DERP00L (?) has been grounded off the Humber estuary.

Own Situation 12 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

North Sea:

On the evening of 12 Nov. two destroyer groups under the command of the Commander, Destroyers, put out for a minelaying operation in the Thames estuary. The Humber operation, planned for the same time, had to be suspended owing to a lack of destroyers (at least four destroyers must be held in readiness to take the homeward-bound DEUTSCHLAND under escort).

Baltic Sea:

Nothing to report.

Submarine Situation:

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

North Sea:

Submarine U "61" is homeward bound in the Kattegat.

Otherwise nothing to report.

Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

According to Dutch reports, the 14,000 ton British steamer PONZANO has been sunk by a submarine.

CONFIDENTIAL

12 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Merchant Shipping 12 Nov.

Own Shipping:

The 7,800 ton steamer MECKLENBURG was detected by a British destroyer between Iceland and the Faroes. Moreover, according to a radio monitoring report, the cruiser DELHI is being sent out to the MECKLENBURG. According to information from the Norwegian Admiralty, a teletype has been received saying that the crew was taking to the boats. From this it is to be assumed that the crew has scuttled the ship.

Neutral Shipping:

During the last 24 hours, our own patrol lines recognized twenty ships within Swedish territorial waters heading west from Trelleborg, and thirty ships heading east to Trelleborg. Only one motor sailing ship was detected inside Danish territorial waters along the southwestern edge of the Sound closed area.

According to radio monitoring, one Norwegian and six Finnish steamers, laden with wood, were lying in Trelleborg harbor, presumably bound for England.

CONFIDENTIAL

13 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance 13 Nov.

1. The British and French have answered the Dutch and Belgian peace proposals in the negative and try to put the responsibility for further developments on Germany. (See Foreign Press Reports No. 522).
2. The tension in Belgium and the Netherlands has to all outward appearances somewhat abated. Alarming news from abroad reporting the imminence of a German invasion has been denied, nevertheless Belgian Government circles are very worried as they feel that Belgium has done all she can to maintain her neutrality, but that she is powerless to put up any further resistance to British blockade measures. American reports show the lively interest taken in official American circles over the independence of the Netherlands.
3. Russo-Finnish negotiations have broken down at the moment because Finland is not prepared to give in, and Russia is insisting on her demands. Further developments cannot yet be foreseen.
4. Attempts to put pressure on Japan are being made by America in order to prevent the present rapprochement between Japan and Germany and Russia from going any further.

China is apparently trying to re-establish relations with Germany on a more friendly footing.

Mining the Sound:

The expansion of the Sound minefield up to the three mile limit which we announced to the Swedes has not yet been carried out. In a conference between the Chief of the Swedish Naval Staff and the German Naval Attache in Stockholm, the proposal was made to have a Swedish minefield blocking the Kogrund Channel similar to the one in World War I and to allow the passage of Swedish ships without contraband through a Swedish mine channel. As this proposal would make for a far more efficient control of contraband shipping than could be obtained by pushing forward to the three mile limit, the Naval Attache who will be in Berlin on 13 Nov. will be ordered to implement this proposal with the Swedes as soon as possible.

CONFIDENTIAL

13 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Special Reports on the Enemy 13 Nov.

Atlantic:

England:

According to the Naval Attaché in Washington, a big convoy is to sail from Boston via Halifax to the East within the next few days. The cargo allegedly consists of 350 planes, miscellaneous war material and oil. Either the HOOD or the REPULSE will also be designated for the proposed convoy. Radio Monitoring Service detected the following vessels in the North Atlantic.

East of 40° W: REVENGE, RESOLUTION, WARSPITE, EFFINGHAM, EMERALD.

West of 40° W: REPULSE, FURIOUS, ENTERPRISE, KEMPENFELT.

In the Canada-West Indies area BERWICK, YORK, ORION, PERTH, SHROPSHIRE (formerly in South Africa), five destroyers.

(Transmitted to the pocket battleships).

The battle cruiser HOOD is believed to be in the western outlet of the Channel. Two or three of the **NORFOLKS** which were reported west of Vigo on 10 Nov. are now presumed to be in the North Atlantic.

On 12 Nov. a convoy of 25 steamers was detected by radio intelligence 400 miles north of the Cape Verde Islands. The ships were apparently assembled for sailing in convoy without a warship escort.

The Intelligence Center in Spain reported that a British submarine, allegedly on a trial run, is missing.

France:

According to a report from the Naval Attaché in Washington, six French flotilla leaders are to be sent out for duty in the South Atlantic, as the British forces there need reinforcements.

Radio Monitoring Service detected several light naval forces in the Channel, possibly on escort duties for troop transports.

North Sea:

(See also: Own Situation North Sea).

13 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Eight medium-sized 1,200 - 3,000 ton steamers have been observed carrying out naval operations in the Channel (presumably troop transports).

Radio Monitoring Service **belatedly** reported that the battleships NELSON, RODNEY, and HOOD which were reported by submarine U "56" on 30 Oct. have probably proceeded to the Clyde (Greenock).

Own Situation 13 Nov.

Atlantic:

At 1700, Greenwich mean time, the DEUTSCHLAND transmitted the special radio signal previously agreed to, announcing that she was about to attempt the Shetlands - Norway passage.

The reception of this message, deliberately made very short to minimize the danger of bearings being taken on it, and which was transmitted on a wave length hitherto not used for the Atlantic traffic, must be acknowledged a fine tribute to the efficiency of the radio distribution service!

A group of four destroyers under the command of the Commander, 4th Destroyer Flotilla, will leave on the evening of 13 Nov. northward bound for their rendezvous with the DEUTSCHLAND. The rendezvous should be at 58° N.

North Sea:

1. The minelaying operation of the Commander, Destroyers will be carried out during the night of 12 Nov. According to Group West, Group II (northern minefield section) was unable to carry out its assignment owing to trouble with its machinery and is returning. Group I under the command of the Commander, Destroyers appears to have completed its task according to plan. A report has not yet been submitted.

The effects of the German mines laid off the Thames were seen on the morning of 13 Nov. Brisk radio traffic developed in the area of the Hoofden which included a very urgent request for a tug from the minelaying cruiser ADVENTURE to which special attention must be called. **She** has probably been damaged by a mine. From radio monitoring observations it is furthermore to be assumed that the

CONFIDENTIAL

13 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

destroyer BLANCHE has been heavily damaged off the Thames because she was asked in what condition she was by **"Chef Nore"**. Radio messages **for** the BLANCHE are being **handled by Basilisk**. (According to later reports, the British Admiralty admitted the loss of a destroyer through a mine explosion).

According to radio reports from "North Forland" Radio Station, the whole area from the Downs to the north has been closed to shipping **as a further consequence of the mines laid in the area.**

2. Thirteen planes (He 111's) of the Xth Air Corps went into operation against British naval forces in the area of the Shetlands. Only two planes were able to attack. 250 kilo bombs were unsuccessfully dropped on British cruisers in Sullom Voe; two seaplanes were destroyed. There was heavy anti-aircraft fire from the warships and from shore anti-aircraft batteries.

Observations: in Sullem Voe: two cruisers, five smaller naval vessels, three freighters, one passenger ship; in Blue Mull Sound: three merchantmen.

(In contrast to the very insignificant direct results of the hits, the indirect results of this first plane attack on the Shetlands should be considered most important).

3. Two Polish destroyers were detected off the Thames by the air reconnaissance of the Commander, Air Force. The spotting plane was attacked by fighters and was hit 60 times (!) The enemy is probably using high explosives. The plane managed to return **without difficulty**.

4. The minesweeper M "132" was sunk in Lister Channel after being damaged by the accidental dropping of a depth charge by the ship ahead of her. No casualties. Salvage operations have been arranged.

Baltic Sea:

In view of the impending return of the DEUTSCHLAND, the patrols of anti-submarine formations and planes have been intensified in the Kattegat.

In the course of the warfare against merchant shipping in the Sound, one Norwegian steamer was seized.

CONFIDENTIAL

13 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Submarine Situation.

Atlantic:

Submarine U "29" left for the Atlantic operational area, **but to begin with** for the special operation in the Bristol Channel.

Submarine U "40" (Commander: Lieut. (s.g.) Barten) was declared missing as **of** 13 Nov.

Two names have been so far mentioned on the BBC in the data given on the crew of submarine U "42", so that the loss of the boat must now be considered certain; **part of the crew seems to have been rescued.**

North Sea:

Nothing to report.

Merchant Shipping 13 Nov.

On 12 Nov. five German ships put out from Vigo homeward bound. Two more steamers put out from the Azores, which now brings the total number of homeward bound ships up to twenty-two.

The Ministry of Transportation has, at the Naval Staff's request, issued the following orders to German merchant shipping:

"German merchant captains on the Baltic and Norwegian routes are to be requested to report every foreign steamer they notice in foreign ports of loading immediately they next enter a German port. Moreover, the name, course, speed, time, and position of every foreign steamer met at sea is to be noted down so that they can provide the German warships they meet with accurate data on the foreign vessels sighted.

CONFIDENTIAL

14 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance 14 Nov.

1. The German press has published the names of the armed enemy passenger steamers, thus **starting the propaganda** campaign, the necessary preliminary to sanctioning the waging of unrestricted submarine warfare against enemy passenger steamers which is part of the plan for the intensification of the warfare against merchant shipping.
2. Reports that England has recently tried to lay claim to Irish ports have been multiplying themselves. The request is said to have been rejected by the Government of Eire. The Irish Premier, de Valera, does not, however, seem to be maintaining a consistently anti-British attitude. Great Britain is possibly demanding the use of these ports **in case the war should be intensified.**

The question should be discussed with the Foreign Office. The Naval Staff feels that Eire's hostility towards Great Britain - not that she openly shows sympathy **for** Germany - should be taken advantage of not only to obtain information about the distribution of British forces in Irish ports, but also the tacit toleration of the German Naval Staff's countermeasures. Advantage should be taken of this opportunity to enquire whether weather reports of decisive importance to us could be transmitted from Irish territory.

3. For the situation in the Netherlands and the stage reached in the Russo-Finnish negotiations see Political Survey No. 71.

Group West will be informed of the change in reference number (giving the key-word) in 6603.

The following teletypes were sent to Group West and Commander, Submarines:

1. The new evaluation of the situation will dictate the restrictions to be made on the immediate precautions to be taken concerning "Otto.Ulla" (Ostend submarines), and given certain conditions, "Otto Lucie" (LMA minelaying Ostend planes), and "Wilhelm Lucie", part "Zeppelin" (LMA minelaying planes, Western Schelde, Zeebrugge part).
2. "Toni Ulla" assignments (torpedo submarines, Hoofden) are to be continued.
3. The submarines designated for the measures planned by Group West Gkdos. 219/39A I (operation "Yellow") will therefore be released at the discretion of the Group for other operations requiring immediate action, except for the boats chosen for "Otto Ulla" and "Toni Ulla".

14 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

4. The temporary subordination of the He "59's" and their crews (from Group East to Group West) ordered by Skl Serial No. 709 Gkdos. on 6 Nov. has been cancelled.

Forenoon.

The Commander-in-Chief, Navy had a **conference** with the Japanese Naval Attaché, Admiral Yendo, and told him of how the German Naval Staff wished to gain the support of Japan:

1. The question of purchasing submarines.
2. Gaining information for the prosecution of German warfare against merchant shipping.
3. Guaranteeing hide-outs to German raiders for supplying and fitting out operations.

(See also War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII)

Special Reports on the Enemy 14 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Radio monitoring reported the following changes in position: the cruiser ACHILLES has put out from Rio. The cruiser EXETER with the Chief of the South American Station on board, together with the HERMES and the destroyer HAVOCK, probably escorting the La Plata convoy, was in radio communication with Freetown.

(Transmitted to pocket battleship GRAF SPEE).

One aircraft carrier, the ARGUS ?, and two destroyers are in the western outlet of the Channel.

British destroyers and armed merchantmen were detected off Ireland.

France:

Observations were confined to reports of patrol activities in the Channel and off the coast of West Africa. Submarines have been detected west of Casablanca, south of Madeira, and north-east of the Antilles.

CONFIDENTIAL

14 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

There was brisk radio traffic in the area of the Hoofden and east of Newcastle and the Humber.

The Commander of the 20th Destroyer Division aboard the Keith reported in Harwich. In the same area further "H" class destroyers and the BURZA were detected.

A few radio bearings were taken in an area southwest of Utsire. An enemy flying boat was overdue between the Shetlands and Norway. It is to be assumed that, now the winter weather is setting in, the reconnaissance of the northern outlets of the North Sea will be transferred to the flying boats stationed in the Shetlands. A Greek steamer ran into a wreck off the Humber; furthermore, a steamer in this area was noticed being towed away. Radio Ostend warned against mines in the approaches to Antwerp (**Scheldt River**).

Own Situation 14 Nov.

<u>Atlantic:</u>	}	Nothing to report. Air reconnaissance in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea was suspended owing to the weather.
<u>North Sea:</u>		

Baltic Sea:

Warfare against merchant shipping in the Aland Sea by the HANSESTADT DANZIG and in Hanoë Bay by the KAISER.

The Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic made the following report on recent experiences in the warfare against merchant shipping in the Aland Sea and in the Gulf of Bothnia:

a. Aland Sea:

1. Except for the regular passenger steamer sailing in the early hours of the morning from the east to Soederhamn no traffic was observed. In the course of the operation which has now started, an endeavor will be made to stop and search **her**. There has been brisk traffic coming from the north passing southwards through Oregrund channel within territorial waters. Most of the traffic running from Soederhamn and Gaevle to the south has been keeping to the territorial waters.

CONFIDENTIAL

14 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The traffic coming from Soederhamn probably occasionally leaves the territorial waters but this can only be ascertained if **our ships appear unexpectedly.**

Otherwise, no traffic has been observed in the Aland Sea. The safest route from Finnish ports is along the Finnish coast and the Aland Sea northwards to where Swedish and Finnish territorial waters meet.

2. According to various statements, the following Swedish warning stations are continuously transmitting sighting reports on German forces to all ports: Soederhamn, Svenska Bjoern lightship, and Svenska Hoegarne.

3. It is suspected that food is being carried from Estonia to Sweden on passenger steamers.

b. Gulf of Bothnia:

1. Outside territorial waters there is only German or harmless neutral shipping.

Generally speaking, suspicious shipping does not leave the territorial waters. The only hope of capturing food-carrying steamers, if there are any here at all, will be if they can be caught off their guard as a result of not having been warned in time.

2. There are Finnish warning stations at: Nyhamn, Roedhamn, and Lagskaer.

3. The effect of having restricted the warfare against merchant shipping up to 20° E has not yet been fully seen in the Gulf of Bothnia.

Group East has reported several cases where Swedish naval forces have infringed the neutrality laws:

Swedish destroyers tried to disturb and disperse German patrol boats off Lille Ground busy stopping and searching neutral steamers, by alleging that anti-aircraft gunnery exercises were in progress (outside the three mile limit). Neutral steamers have been warned by Swedish naval forces of the presence of German warships. Swedish and Finnish lightships and coastal stations have been sending out warnings on the appearance of German raiders.

CONFIDENTIAL

14 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The behaviour of the Swedish naval forces is to be strongly condemned. In this respect the Naval Staff will not even entertain the idea of granting any concessions to the Swedes. Firm measures must be maintained in the warfare against merchant shipping. A cruiser will be dispatched as soon as possible to give active support to our naval forces engaged in this warfare and to emphasize that we take our interests there seriously.

As a result of the information received, the following orders about the behaviour of German naval forces have been issued to Group East and to the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic:

"1. Cases of infringements of neutrality will be followed up through diplomatic channels.

2. Forces are to continue taking energetic action and are not to allow themselves to be prevented from exercising their rights. Weapons are only to be used if the other party resorts to them first. Refuse to acknowledge the excuse of gunnery exercises off Lille Ground.

3. Report incidents by radio as quickly as possible. Detailed reports giving exact statements, rather in the form of a deposition, are to be forwarded afterwards.

The Naval Attaché in Stockholm has, moreover, been instructed to refer to these various cases of neutrality infringements by Swedish naval forces in his discussion with the Chief of the Swedish Naval Staff.

Submarine Situation:

Atlantic:

Submarines U "29" and U "38" put out for the Atlantic operational area.

Otherwise nothing to report.

Submarine U "43" arrived in the operational area southwest of Ireland and reported that it was impossible to use her weapons owing to the weather.

CONFIDENTIAL

14 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

Submarine U "15" put out for the North Sea operational area and submarine U "57" for a special operation off the British coast.

Submarine Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

The 275 ton trawler CRESSWELL was sunk off the Scottish coast (Radio Daventry report).

According to an agent's report, the 3,087 ton French steamer CAPITAINE EDMOND LABORIE has been sunk. The British trawler NIGHT HAWK is said to have rescued the crew of the 11,000 ton Norwegian steamer ARNE KJOEDE northwest of the Hebrides.

Merchant Shipping 14 Nov.

The steamer KIEL has returned from overseas with a cargo including pig iron, cotton, copper ingots. Shipping is, therefore, now distributed as follows:

In home waters (including 13 ships on duty on the Norwegian shipping route)	556 ships	=	65.4 %
In neutral harbors	248	"	- 29.1 %
Homeward bound	23	"	- 2.7 %
Lost	21	"	- 2.5 %

On 13 Nov. the 6,038 GRT steamer PARANA was scuttled by her crew west of Patreks Fiord (Iceland) to avoid capture by a British warship.

Between 4 Sept. and 13 Nov. the German ships breaking through the British blockade brought back 208,783 tons of goods from overseas, including:

approximately	80,000 tons ore
	46,000 tons grain
	84,000 tons wood
	11,000 tons cotton.

CONFIDENTIAL

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items.

1. New Fuehrer Directive dated 14 Nov. 1939.

a. In the course of Operation West, the possibility of Dutch neutrality not being respected by the Western Powers must be taken into account (such as flying over Holland, occupying the Dutch fortress with small forces). In this case Germany should try and gain as much territory as possible in Holland as it will be required as an air defense outpost. Apart from the tasks to be carried out in accordance with previously issued instructions, the Navy will also have the following responsibilities: it will block the Dutch fairways and ports and also attack the Dutch Fleet but only by order of the Fuehrer, and it will support the Army in its occupation of the Dutch Islands.

b. The Navy has been sanctioned to carry out the following measures, effective immediately:

I. Passenger steamers observed to be armed or known to be armed are to be sunk without warning. The names of ships known to be armed will be regularly published in the press.

II. Tankers bound for Britain or France or coming from Britain or France are to be sunk without warning in a well defined area to be decided upon by the Commander-in-Chief, Navy off the coasts of Britain and France. Tankers clearly recognized to be American, Russian, Japanese, Italian or Spanish are not included.

2. The Chief, Naval Staff ordered an investigation into the possibilities of invading **England**, should the future developments of the war make the problem arise.

3. The High Command, Navy requested the Foreign Office to establish the legal position of the Polish submarines interned in Sweden and of the Polish material also there, and requested that they be surrendered to Germany. The Foreign Office answered that because a country has been occupied does not mean that the material it has in neutral countries can be legitimately claimed. Nevertheless, the Foreign Office has proposed informing Sweden of the German demands in order to return to them later on. The Chief, Naval Staff concurred.

4. Report on the auxiliary cruiser position:

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Six auxiliary cruisers are being fitted out at the moment.

<u>Names:</u>	No. 1	KURMARK	No. 3	NEUMARK
	No. 2	GOLDENFELS	No. 4	SANTA CRUZ
		No. 5	KANDELFELS	
		No. 7	LECH	

Armament: 6 15 cm guns, 2 twin tubes G 7 v
2 "He 114" planes

Deadlines:

1.	10 Dec.	1939
2.	10 Dec.	1939
3.	30 Nov.	1939
4.	20 Dec.	1939
5.	5 Jan.	1940
7.	Mar.	1940

(For further details see War Diary, Part B, Vol. V, page 51)

Because the steamers NEUMARK and KURMARK are very difficult to camouflage, the Chief, Naval Staff will reserve himself the right to use these ships for warfare against merchant shipping overseas.

Every endeavor will be made to send out the first auxiliary cruiser to the operational area by the beginning or middle of January.

Special Reports on the Enemy 15 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Radio monitoring detected convoy movements off the Spanish coast. There was an escort of British destroyers. The Intelligence Organization in Spain reported that a convoy consisting of 22 ships escorted by destroyers put out from Gibraltar at 1200 making for the west and was joined by a convoy coming from the east.

The following information about the Atlantic convoys was submitted by the Naval Attaches in Washington and Madrid:

The fairly large convoy said to be coming from Boston or Halifax is to assemble on 18 Nov. 150 miles east of Boston. The cargo allegedly consists of 415 fighters and bombers, 250 heavy trucks, 300 light armored cars, oil, wheat, frozen meat, automobiles, and war material.

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

A British merchant captain told pilots in Bilbao that his ship had come from Chile and had in Panama received orders to touch Kingston and sail from there in convoy with 46 other steamers and three British cruisers to Wolfsrock. Two British cruisers and one British aircraft carrier were in mid-Atlantic. The convoy separated at Wolfsrock, making for **the British Isles and Brest.**

Continuous air reconnaissance was maintained throughout the passage.

France:

Radio monitoring reported that the battleship STRASBOURG and another big ship coming from Casablanca had dropped anchor off Oran. The battleship PARIS and one submarine and one other vessel were 100 miles west of Casablanca.

The 11th Destroyer Division lying in the Channel area is making for Dunkirk (!)

North Sea:

Results of our Minelaying Operations:

The British Admiralty has issued a warning to shipping **about** the area east of the line Tongue lightship - North Goodwin lightship. (See also War Diary, Part C, Vol. VI, Mine Warfare). The declared area off the southern approaches of the Thames reported by the British only partially affects the areas we have mined so that further results are to be expected in the northern part of our first minelaying operation.

According to British press and radio reports, the enemy seems to be under the impression that we are using large numbers of minelaying submarines to lay mines in contravention of international law outside territorial waters. In this connection the radio monitoring report stating that several destroyers have been carrying out submarine patrol duties in the Harwich area since yesterday, should be mentioned. It is quite possible that the enemy has not realized or cannot believe it possible that our minelaying operations were carried out by surface forces and therefore think that all this minelaying is due to submarines.

According to Radio Daventry, the Greek steamer GEORGOS sank after having struck a wreck off the Humber, and the British coastal steamer WOODTOWN sank as a result of an explosion.

CONFIDENTIAL

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Shipping Traffic:

On 14 Nov. the battle cruiser HOOD was probably sailing in the Rosyth area in the afternoon.

Vessels of the Northern Patrol are using the Clyde and Tyne as bases.

The British Admiralty informed Admiral Dover and the Commander, Submarines of the engagement with and the possible destruction of a big submarine on 15 Nov. at 0250 off Dover. At approximately the same time French Command Stations ordered the suspension of submarine chasing in the Dunkirk area.

As there are no German submarines in this area, the enemy has been possibly attacking one of his own submarines and has sunk her, we hope.

It is reported in official Danish circles that, should the war be further intensified, Great Britain plans to block the Kiel Canal and also to land a heavy concentration of troops in Hirshals harbor.

Own Situation 15 Nov.

Atlantic:

1. The pocket battleship GRAF SPEE reported as follows from the Indian Ocean:

"Have searched all routes round Durban for twelve days. Have only sunk AFRICAN SHELL off Delagoa Bay. **Definitely** outside territorial waters. Otherwise only neutral shipping. Proceeding to "Altmark" for engine overhaul.

Approach points off important ports **are secret and far** to the side. These and the routes to the harbors so heavily defended that heavy operation necessary. Outside these approach points, all enemy ships sail routes very different from peace time ones. Systematic searches hold little promise of any results. Enemy ships will only be met by chance.

Further warfare against merchant shipping or penetration of Bahia - Freetown at new moon depends on machinery being overhauled. Only have cipher material for home area until end of November. Ship's plane out of action."

CONFIDENTIAL

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The ALTMARK received the order from the GRAF SPEE to move **rendezvous line "4"** 700 miles to the **east**.

The Naval Staff presumes that the GRAF SPEE dispatched the tanker ALTMARK to meet the supply ship DRESDEN and that she is now meeting the ALTMARK in the area south of the Cape in the South Atlantic to have her engines overhauled and take on supplies of fuel and provisions.

It proved impossible for the GRAF SPEE to comply with the directive received on 21st Oct. in the manner hoped for by the Naval Staff by transferring her theater of operations to the Indian Ocean and carrying out heavy surprise attacks on the enemy shipping routes there, because according to a report from the GRAF SPEE, the enemy merchant shipping traffic is so cleverly organized that it could only be effectively attacked by carrying out a large-scale operation against it.

In agreement with the plans of the GRAF SPEE, the Naval Staff scheduled the return of the ship for an extensive dockyard overhaul for January 1940 and informed her that with regard to the routine dockyard period of the battleships from 27 Nov. to 31 Dec., the ship's break-through could be supported by the battleships after 14 Jan.

Approximately four weeks are needed for the GRAF SPEE's return to home waters from her operational area off South Africa, so that she will most probably start her return passage at the beginning of December and will penetrate the Freetown-Bahia narrows during the new moon period of 10 - 15 Dec. Should the overhauling of her engines last about **one week**, that is until 28 Nov., she will only have a very short time left for attacking merchant shipping west or east of the Cape. An offensive sweep into the northern part of the Indian Ocean no longer comes into question if the plan scheduling her return for January is to be adhered to. The Naval Staff does not anticipate that the present overhauling of her engines will enable her to carry out a longer operation than previously **surmised**, and considers it unfair to instruct the ship to continue her warfare against merchant shipping beyond January when distance makes it impossible for the home base to gain a sufficiently clear picture of the ship's technical and strategic capacities. Therefore decisions on further operations must be left to the Commander's discretion.

Making the ship operate in the Indian Ocean to the limits of her capacity and then sending her to a Russian or Japanese port - a course which the Naval Staff did discuss, in the event of special circumstances arising - would at present be tantamount to acquiescing to her complete loss to German naval warfare, for relations with Russia and Japan are still not on a footing which would justify us in withdrawing our pocket battleship to an East Asian

CONFIDENTIAL

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

port for repairs. Indeed, it would at the present time be impossible even to contemplate the voluntary surrender of one of our precious, fully operational pocket battleships, not only for purely strategic reasons but because of the loss of prestige inevitably also incurred. The pocket battleships, as being the most effective of all the weapons at the disposal of German naval warfare, must be preserved as long as possible. Only for the achievement of large-scale military or strategic victories could their loss ever be countenanced.

2. The pocket battleship DEUTSCHLAND has succeeded in breaking through the blockade. The ship passed through the Skagerrak, the Kattegat, and the Great Belt under escort of the 4th Destroyer Flotilla without incident and will be met at the southern outlet of the Great Belt by the Commanding Admiral, Group East, Admiral Carls. The ship put into Gdynia on the evening of 15 Nov. and was renamed LUETZOW by the Commander-in-Chief.

For the reasons for changing her name see War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

The tanker WESTERWALD received the following orders:
"Proceed home through Great Belt and then through new fairway.

No false markings in Norwegian territorial waters.
Do not stay in Norwegian ports to avoid being searched.
Maintain radio silence."

At 1200 the WESTERWALD reported her position by radio in AE 6361.

There was no need for the WESTERWALD to report her position. The position reported is more than 200 miles east of Iceland and seems very improbable. The capital letters A E have possibly been confused with large grid square A D east of Greenland.

North Sea:

Nothing to report.

Group West issued the following report on the minelaying operation by destroyers south of the Thames estuary.

Notice of the postponement of the operation to 8 Nov. was really given in advance to enable the destroyers to undertake new orders if necessary. On the evening of 8 Nov. it was cancelled owing to the weather. Before putting out, two destroyers broke down with engine trouble. One destroyer, held in reserve, put out instead.

CONFIDENTIAL

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

9 Nov.: No ships put out owing to the weather.

10 Nov.: They put out. Shortly before, the machinery of one destroyer with mines aboard broke down. **Operation then broken off, as the plan to concentrate the minecarrying destroyers on the southern part was impossible after the groups had been separated.**

11 Nov.: No ships put out owing to the fog.

12 Nov.: Seven destroyers put out. The northern part was cancelled because the destroyers were needed for special operations. Both the minecarrying destroyers of the northern half of the southern part broke down with engine trouble. The group turned back; the southern half was carried out according to plan. The operation seems to have gone unnoticed. Two enemy destroyers and several patrol boats were sighted. The homeward passage was favored by misty weather. The **laying** of the minefield up to 1.2 miles east of the Tongue lightship and 0.7 miles northeast of Spit **was in part interfered with by steamers.**

Baltic Sea:

Two more steamers were captured north of the Sound minefield in the course of the warfare against merchant shipping. Otherwise nothing to report.

Submarine Situation 15 Nov.

Atlantic:

In the Operational Area:

Submarine U "53" west of Gibraltar homeward bound.

Submarine U "33"	}	in the operational area southwest of Ireland.
" U "41"		
" U "43"		

Outward bound:

Submarine U "49"	west of the Hebrides
" U "29"	central part of North Sea

On the basis of the report of submarine U "43" that owing to the weather weapons cannot be used and that there is no shipping at position "Yellow" (southwest of Ireland), submarines U "41", U "43", U "49" have been ordered to proceed to position "Red" (northwesterly tip of Spain).

CONFIDENTIAL

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

In the Mediterranean: Submarine U "26".

Submarine U "38" is making for the operational area off the northern part of the Norwegian coast.

North Sea:

Only submarine U "60" is in the operational area off the Norwegian coast.

Submarine U "61" has returned from operations.

Outward bound:

Submarines U "15", U "57", U "13", U "18", U "19", U "22".

Assignments:

Submarine U "15"	special operation off Lowestoft.
" U "19"	special operation northeast of Great Yarmouth.
" U "13"	operational area between Firth of Forth and Newcastle.
" U "18"	} area off Kinnaird Head.
" U "22"	
" U "57"	operational area northern outlet of Channel.

Submarine Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

Submarine U "53" reported having sighted a convoy west of Gibraltar. While transmitting her radio message, bearings were taken on her and she lost contact owing to the attacks launched by planes and destroyers.

The short report of the operation of submarine U "25" was as follows:

"Duration from 18 Oct. to 13 Nov. Operational area southwest of Ireland approached via Fair Isle Channel. Air patrols as far as southern tip of Norway. Air activity even on very windy days. Short halt southwest of Ireland, then proceeded to operational area northwest of Cape Finisterre. Moderate neutral individually routed shipping close inshore. Convoy attacked. Two steamers were probably hit as detonations were heard. Their sinking could not be observed owing to enemy defenses. Return started before proper time because crossbeam of foreward torpedo hatch broke off and the boat ~~cannot~~ dive to all depths, when engaged with her guns.

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Convoy in grid square BF 4951 (Bay of Biscay), northeasterly course."

Merchant Shipping 15 Nov.

The following Warning Report No. 103 has been sent out to the Reich's representatives abroad concerned:

"1. All ships which left Vigo on 10 Oct. have returned home. Since 3 Sep. 89 ships have returned home in all.

2. After putting out, follow false courses for a few days if possible.

3. There is often fog in Denmark Strait near ice limit.

4. If whilst at sea an escape is impossible, scuttle. To date the British have always rescued the crews from their boats.

5. Pass the narrowest channels at night."

According to reports from the Ministry of Transportation (Ministerialrat Coupette) the monthly cost of German ships lying in foreign ports amounts to approximately 1,300,000 marks in foreign currency, 400,000 marks per month of which go to the supply ships.

This fact makes it clear that all possible means must be tried to bring home all ships lying in foreign ports, because these ships are being wasted abroad, and if they are sold to neutrals they will certainly be turned over to the enemy's merchant tonnage, or else sooner or later the enemy will purchase or commandeer them as otherwise he would not in the first place have agreed to their purchase by neutral powers.

The steamer LEANDER (left Vigo on 8 Nov.) was captured by the enemy.

According to a merchant captain's report, 18 British steamers (!) were dispatched with 200,000 tons of ore during his stay in Narvik (29 Oct.).

A further report announces that 15 British steamers loaded mainly with ore were waiting to assemble into convoy off Floroe on 15 Nov.

CONFIDENTIAL

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The dispatch of submarines against northern ore and wood **ports** is going to be most urgently demanded of the Naval Staff! The need for using submarines in the northern operational area has been pointed out to the Commander, Submarines. Because of the urgency of this task, contrary to the orders previously planned by the Commander, Submarines, submarine U "38" will be sent out as the first boat against the British wood and ore **ports** from Murmansk and Narvik. Submarine U "36" is to follow within the next few days.

Without a doubt, the first blow against these vital enemy communications must not be dealt with just one or two boats, but with at least four or five boats simultaneously. The operation should be entirely successful because the enemy defenses are weak in this area. Because of the great distance of this new operational area from home bases, only large boats can be used and because there are only very few available at present, they can only be provided by abandoning the execution of further operations in the Atlantic. But it is at the present moment quite out of the question to abandon opportunities of operating against the main Atlantic trade routes of Britain and France as it would enable the enemy to relax his vigilance and spread his shipping which is badly restricted by having to sail in convoy, and it would also considerably relieve his economic situation. Submarine operations are at present to continue along the following basic lines:

1. The enemy is to be constantly disturbed by concentrating large submarines at the many focal points of his merchant shipping in the Atlantic.

2. Large submarines are to carry out systematic minelaying operations off the west coast of England.

3. All available small boats are to be mustered for a minelaying offensive off the British coast and to attack enemy warships off their bases and also in convoy.

4. Parallel with the operations in the Atlantic, the remaining available boats are to be used against the northern trade routes from Murmansk and Narvik.

Afternoon.

The following points were discussed between the Chief, Foreign Affairs Section and the Foreign Office:

1. Intensification of naval warfare against **England**
Attitude of the Foreign Office to the Naval Staff's memorandum.
Indication that details will be discussed between the Special Staff for Mercantile and Economic Warfare and the Foreign Office at Armed Forces High Command.

CONFIDENTIAL

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

2. Question of sanctioning firing without warning against

a. all armed enemy passenger vessels

b. all neutral or enemy tankers sailing to Britain or France or coming from there.

3. Question of British naval forces using Irish ports and Naval Staff's request for permission to transmit information and weather forecasts from Eire.

4. Encroachments of Swedish warships against German naval vessels engaged in warfare against merchant shipping in violation of international law.

5. Warfare against merchant shipping in the Baltic Sea. Impeding "transit" voyages which are still operating to a large extent.

6. Remarks of Naval Staff on the announcement of a declared area off Peterhead for unrestricted submarine operations. (For further details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII).

On the basis of the submarines' latest experiences, and as a result of the latest discoveries of the Torpedo Experimental Station, the pocket battleships have received the following instructions on torpedo firing:

1. Depth setting for firing with percussion fuse at least two meters less than draught of target.

2. Depth setting not shallower than three meters; if sea and swell are above 3, at least four meters.

3. If percussion fuse is used, quick firing not allowed.

Fleet Command has made a request for the 2nd PT Boat Flotilla, now operating in the Baltic Sea, to relieve the 1st PT Boat Flotilla during its routine dockyard period. Group East does not feel it can spare the 2nd PT Boat Flotilla, as it is the only flotilla fast enough and strong enough for anti-submarine activity and patrols in the Baltic Sea Entrances and for swift operations in the Kattegat against surprise appearances of enemy forces; furthermore one can operate almost throughout the whole winter in the Baltic Sea and the Kattegat, whereas this is usually impossible in the North Sea.

CONFIDENTIAL

15 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

At the moment, the Naval Staff does not see the need for transferring the 2nd PT Boat Flotilla to the North Sea; **this would,** however, be necessary in the event of the execution of Operation West. A decision will therefore be made according to the further development of the situation.

CONFIDENTIAL

16 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance.

Special Items:

1. The war zone arrangement adopted by the United States has caused great alarm in neutral countries. The Netherlands objected to the inclusion of Dutch waters in this closed area; Eire, too, requested that American ships should continue touching Irish ports.
2. From 20 Nov. British control of contraband will be tightened up in so far as goods whose recipient is not specified in the ship's papers will be liable to immediate confiscation.
3. Sir John Simon stated in the House of Commons that Great Britain firmly intended to continue respecting the neutrality of Belgium and the Netherlands. But at the same time he referred to German troop concentrations on the Belgian and Dutch frontiers.
4. All the Indian Provincial Governments announced their resignation in protest against British policy in India. Ghandi reiterated his demand for independence in far more vigorous terms.
5. In South Africa the Boer movement under General Hertzog is coming more and more to the fore. He demands the separation of African and British politics.
6. Russo-Japanese relations are developing favorably. Prospects of a Russo-Japanese agreement are increasing.
7. Russia is **ending** the Naphta agreement with Italy. There is news of an alleged Russo-Italian estrangement as a result of growing conflicting interests in the Balkans.

(See "Political **Review** No. 73").

Forenoon.

A directive was issued to Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch on preparations for methods of transport in the shallows. High Command, Army, General Staff, 1st Division dealt with the same question at the same time:

Should the enemy violate the neutrality of Belgium, German troops will have to occupy the country. The southern tip of the Netherlands will also have to be marched through. The possibility of Holland being attacked or occupied from the sea by Great Britain and France is to be anticipated first by squadrons of attacking planes and later by army divisions. In the interests of the Army's air cover and flank security, every endeavor will have to be made to occupy as much Dutch territory as possible. Army operations

16 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

will be supported from the sea by suitable naval forces which will prevent enemy naval forces from impeding the ground fighting. In support of Army operations for the occupation of the Dutch Islands, the Navy will undertake the transportation of troops from the mainland to the islands across the shallows. The Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch, will make the necessary preparations in conjunction with the Army General Staff, Transportation Branch. The small craft on the Dutch coast will be utilized and sufficient numbers of suitable vessels will also be kept available in German ports. The vessels will be manned by crews familiar with the shallows.

Conference of the Naval Attaché in Stockholm, Rear Admiral Steffan, with the Chief of the Swedish Naval Staff on the laying of the Sound minefield. It was suggested that the Sound minefield should be completed by the Swedes within their territorial waters with a mine channel for Swedish warships and Swedish merchantmen guaranteed by the Swedish Government not to be carrying contraband. Neutral shipping will have to pass through the German mine channel.

In principle, Germany only acknowledges the three mile limit, but once the Swedish minefield has been completed, she will be willing to forego her rights for the time being and actually to acknowledge the Swedish four mile claim.

Special Reports on the Enemy 16 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Shipping Movements: Radio monitoring detected:

The aircraft carrier ARGUS (on 15 Nov. west of the Channel) appeared in connection with the CAPETOWN in the radio picture. As this ship is sailing off the west coast of Africa, it is assumed that the ARGUS is proceeding to Freetown.

The cruiser BERWICK, in Canadian waters up to now, put into Portsmouth on 14 Nov.

CONFIDENTIAL

16 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Convoy HX "9" is proceeding from Halifax to **England.** Escort vessels from the West will be responsible for the convoy up to 48° N and 29° W and will be relieved in this area by vessels belonging to the Western Approaches.

According to Radio Rome, the battle cruisers REPULSE and RENOWN have been sighted off the Canadian coast.

The Naval Attaché in Madrid reported a convoy of 15 ships escorted by one cruiser and two destroyers on the morning of 15 Nov. in the Strait of Gibraltar.

France:

According to radio monitoring, two cruisers, two flotilla leaders and three destroyers anchored off Casablanca on the evening of 15 Nov. to take on supplies of fuel and provisions. Two French submarines were detected in the area between Cape Spartel and Casablanca and four more in the area 60 miles west of Nantes carrying out patrol and reconnaissance duties.

North Sea:

On the evening of 16 Nov. the British convoy FM "37" was off Hartlepool. Its position was transmitted to the 2nd Cruiser Squadron and the 4th Destroyer Flotilla.

On the evening of 15 Nov. the Commander in Chief, Home Fleet was at sea in the Shetlands area.

Submarine U "18" reported a suspicious fishing vessel and an enemy submarine on the western edge of our declared area off the center of Channel 2.

According to an agent's report from Copenhagen, it is said that during the last few days the British have been laying a deeply set minefield in the Skaw - Vinga lightship direction.

Baltic Sea:

Western Part of the Baltic Sea:

At 1600, submarine alarm off Schleimuende. The submarine chase was without result. The torpedo tracks sighted by torpedo boat T "111" may have been aimed at the battleship SCHLESSEN which was sailing as a target ship for the Torpedo Training School. The Naval Staff has no reason to doubt the presence of enemy submarines in the western part of the Baltic Sea. It is urgently necessary to send out all available defense forces against these submarines which have possibly been lurking for favorable conditions for attack ever since the last submarine report, that is since 26 Oct. The

CONFIDENTIAL

16 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

necessity for the swift, efficient blocking of the Baltic Sea entrances has been again confirmed. The Naval Attachés in Stockholm and Copenhagen will be informed of the urgency of the German demand for the quick blocking of the Sound and Belts. (See 17 Nov.).

Own Situation 16 Nov.

Atlantic:)
North Sea:) Nothing to report.

Baltic Sea:

Continuation of the warfare against merchant shipping. Renewed hampering of German warfare against merchant shipping by a Swedish destroyer and patrol boat. Further steamers were captured.

Submarine Situation 16 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

Submarine U "47" put out for the Atlantic operational area.

Submarine U "41" reports having chased the 5,267 ton steamer HOPE STAR 160 miles west of Brest and having unsuccessfully fired torpedoes against her (misses or failures ?).

The following report was received from submarine U "46" about submarine U "45", now presumed missing, namely that on - Oct., submarine U "45" radioed:

"Have destroyed three large steamers proceeding at 15 knots without lights. Am chasing the fourth one. Grid square BE 3266/3335. "

The fourth steamer was possibly the STONEPOOL which appeared in **radio traffic** in connection with anti-submarine action and which was praised in the enemy radio service.

CONFIDENTIAL

16 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

Nothing to report.

Merchant Shipping 16 Nov.

The Fuehrer ordered the return of the BREMEN as soon as the situation permits.

On 9 Nov., a Swedish newspaper reported on the extensive work which is planned by the Swedes in order to deepen the three mile channel at Falsterboe. Then next year a seven meter channel is to be undertaken. This will not only involve dredging the sandbanks but a submerged limestone ridge will also have to be blasted in order to create the channel in question which it would otherwise block at one spot. The channel which has been **marked around** Falsterboe within the three mile limit, now only has a depth of five meters at mean level and cannot be passed by vessels of over 4.5 meter draught.

On 16 Nov. Radio Copenhagen announced that, as Germany had refused to acknowledge the Swedish four mile limit, a number of ships had reduced their cargo in Trelleborg in order to be able to proceed along the Swedish coast within the three mile limit.

The Rumanian Shipping Service refused to transport German transit shipments from the Danube to Aegean and Mediterranean ports so that there is at the moment no way of shipping exports from Germany via Rumania on Rumanian ships to Greece etc. The British are said to have captured two ships of the Rumanian Shipping Service with imports for Germany and Czechoslovakia and to have compelled them to unload their cargo in Malta.

According to Radio Daventry, on 15 Nov. the First Lord of the British Admiralty announced that of 3,070 ships which had sailed in convoy only seven had been sunk.

Shipping movements in White Sea ports:

It has been established from observations which are, however, not all embracing, that by far the greatest part of the shipping is Norwegian. As a rule, the shipping routes run from Archangel or Murmansk via **Honningsvaag** (near the North Cape) and Loedingen (Lofoten Islands) to Narvik or Bergen from where the ships sail under escort either to British or Dutch ports. The cargoes consist almost entirely of wood.

CONFIDENTIAL

16 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The following ships were observed, some several times, with fresh shipments during the period October - beginning of November 1939.

- 15 British ships
- 1 Danish ship
- 4 Estonian ships
- 3 Finnish ships
- 3 Greek ships
- 1 Dutch ship
- 9 **Latvian ships**
- 18 Norwegian ships
- 4 Swedish ships
- 5 Russian ships

A drop in shipping traffic is to be expected when the White Sea begins to freeze in the middle of November. Inquiries into the amount of wood exports which can still be expected from Murmansk are being made.

Radio Tokyo reported the departure of German steamers. As reporting German shipping movements may have serious consequences for the ships involved, friendly neutrals will be requested not to make these reports.

The tanker WESTERWALD has been informed that she will be taken under escort by forces of Group East north of the Great Belt declared area and that she should change to the home wave length once in home waters. The ship is to report her position near Schultz Ground.

Evening.

Group West has been notified of the change of reference number to 7803
(announcement of key-word).

CONFIDENTIAL

17 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance.

1. For the situation in Belgium see: "Political **Review** No. 75".
2. On 17 Nov. there was a meeting of the Supreme Allied War Council with Chamberlain, Halifax, Chatfield, Kingsley Wood, Daladier, Gamelin, Darlan, Veuillemain participating, to discuss combined operations by French and British forces and to obtain close collaboration in the spheres of aviation, armaments output, supplies of raw material, oil and food, economic and merchant warfare (see also **Foreign Press**). Six executive committees were formed for aviation, improving raw material and oil supplies, food, maritime shipping, and the blockade.
3. For the attitude of the Scandinavian Countries to Germany see: "Political **Review** No. 75". The hostility clearly displayed against Germany in Sweden (especially in merchant shipping and working class circles) is particularly noteworthy as also the very remarkable British propaganda and espionage work in Scandinavia.

1100 hours

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. In view of the constant danger of submarines in the western part of the Baltic Sea, the Chief, Naval Staff ordered that Group East should carry out all preparations for the complete blocking of the Belts by laying a minefield with a mine channel for our own forces. Should the Danes not carry out the blocking according to the wishes of the Naval Staff or should they delay it unduly, the blocking will be carried out by our own forces without further ado.
2. Report on the preliminary reflections of the Naval Staff on the question of announcing a partial declared area off the north coast of Britain (Peterhead-Firth of Forth).

The information we have before us reveals that Britain is creating a 'war channel' along the east coast in an endeavor at all costs to maintain the security of her very important coastal shipping route by laying long flanking minefields and announcing declared areas. It will, therefore, be our task to frustrate the enemy's plans and to expose the coastal route and the routes into his important harbors to the German naval warfare menace.

CONFIDENTIAL

17 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Having duly weighed the matter, the Naval Staff would incline towards announcing a declared area off the coast from Kinnaird Head to St. Abbs Head (position: approximately Kinnaird Head up to 0° 30' W, St. Abbs Head up to 1° 30' W). This declared area would close off the important ports of Aberdeen, Montrose, Dundee, and the Firth of Forth with Edinburgh and Leith. Actual minelaying is not proposed for the moment, but submarines are to **give the impression of a minefield by using electric torpedoes.**

The announcement of such a declared area (for further details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VI Mine Warfare) will have to depend on the general situation, and for various details on the observations of submarines U "18" and U "22" at present operating off Kinnaird Head. The question will not arise before 1 Dec.

Special Reports on the Enemy 17 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Reports from Convoys:

According to a statement made by the captain of a Norwegian steamer, the assembly point of **England-U.S.A.** convoys is 130 miles west of Kirkwall. Continuous control is said to be maintained by British warships between Kirkwall and Ireland.

An agent reports that Canadian planes, in co-operation with British warships, are constantly on operations over the Atlantic.

According to information from the Naval Attaché in Madrid, a fairly large convoy is to put out from Gibraltar on 24 or 25 Nov.

Convoy HX "9" is in the western part of the Bay of Biscay escorted by French submarines and light naval forces.

France:

A French battleship (PROVENCE?) put into Casablanca at 0800 on 17 Nov.

The Commander of the 6th Squadron has requested the naval authorities in Morocco to carry out a reconnaissance of the area 50 miles off the Casablanca - Gibraltar coast on 18 and 19 Nov., presumably because large ships will be there.

17 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

The Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet who was already at sea on 16 Nov. was sailing in the Minch on the afternoon of 17 Nov.

The Commander of the 2nd Cruiser Squadron was in Rosyth on the evening of 17 Nov. with "J" class destroyers.

On 17 Nov. enemy reconnaissance planes flew over Wilhelmshaven at very high altitudes. No bombs; our anti-aircraft guns scored no results. The planes were transmitting reconnaissance reports on German naval forces they had sighted. Reports inaccurate. The description of the types did not correspond to their actual locations.

Radio Daventry announced a successful reconnaissance over **northwest** Germany. Important naval bases are said to have been photographed.

The 2nd Air Force carried out an air reconnaissance near Dunkirk and detected busy merchant shipping traffic in the Dover-Calais area. Two warships were also sighted.

The Xth Air Corps sighted four flying boats and two cruisers in the northern part of the Shetlands, but only steamers in Lerwick. No observations of Scapa Flow were made.

For a survey of the activity of the main British and French squadrons from 8 - 15 Nov. see Radio Monitoring Report No. 11/39.

Special Items.

Great Britain:

1. The Home Fleet at present only consists of the battle cruisers NELSON, RODNEY, HOOD, the 2nd Cruiser Squadron and the 8th Destroyer Flotilla. Some of them are carrying out special operations. The HOOD is on escort duty, the cruisers SHEFFIELD and BELFAST are with the Northern Patrol.

2. The patrols in the Faroes-Shetlands area are being reinforced.

Cruisers, destroyers and auxiliary vessels are being used. The aircraft carrier PEGASUS is in the Shetlands area.

CONFIDENTIAL

17 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

3. Convoy duties are being further extended in the North Sea. Approach points on the east coast of Britain are Kinnaird Head and the Firth of Forth. Destroyers are mainly on patrol. Shipping off the coast is being seriously hampered by the German mines there. Destroyers are patrolling the Harwich-Thames area. ("G" class and Polish BURZA-class destroyers).

4. British submarines are in waiting positions in the area off Borkum, in the Skagerrak, and off the southwest coast of Norway. There is a declared area off Channel 2 (?).

5. Furthermore there is heavily escorted convoy traffic in the Atlantic. The convoys are taken under escort by Forces of the Home Fleet at approximately 48° N, 29° W. The entire Atlantic route is air patrolled.

6. For the distribution of forces in the North and South Atlantic see the chart included with the radio monitoring report.

7. There has been a heavy withdrawal of forces from the Mediterranean (at present there are only one battleship, three light cruisers, and a few smaller vessels left) as well as from East Asia (at present there is only one cruiser left!)

France: Patrols, anti-submarine and escort activities. Nothing to report. There are heavier concentrations in the Dakar area.

Own Situation 17 Nov.

Atlantic:

The tanker WESTERWALD informed the German Consulate in Trondheim that she was stopped by a Norwegian torpedo boat off Hestvik (Hidra Island). The WESTERWALD asked the consul to come aboard and to bring a Norwegian pilot.

The ship had been ordered by the Naval Staff to sail in the neutral Norwegian territorial waters and to act like a merchantman. The examination by the Norwegians is therefore to be taken as a matter of routine. It is anticipated that the ship will be able to proceed according to plan.

North Sea:

On the afternoon of 17 Nov. the minelaying operation of the 5th Destroyer Division of the northern approaches of the Thames estuary was launched according to plan.

CONFIDENTIAL

17 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

For a survey of the positions and operational readiness of the destroyers on 18 Nov. see War Diary, Part B, page 49.

Baltic Sea:

At 1730 a submarine alarm west of Fehmarn was received from the cruiser EMDEN. Three torpedo tracks were sighted. Immediate submarine chasing operations have so far been without result.

Orders were given for the blocking of the Baltic Sea west of Gjedser for naval exercises. The Naval Staff dispatched the following directive to the Naval Attachés in Stockholm and Copenhagen:

On 16 and 17 Nov. new submarine attacks were reported in the Baltic Sea, this time against the battleship SCHLESSEN off Schleimuende and against the cruiser EMDEN south of Kjelsnor. Please point out these attacks to the Navy there, as a further proof of the urgency of a decision being reached on the question of blocking the Sound and the Belts, and ask them by what dates, at the latest, the proposed minefields could be laid; otherwise Germany will have to take the necessary measures herself.

Warfare against merchant shipping in the Hanoë Bight area and in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea has been continued by the minelayers KAISER and HANSESTADT DANZIG. Nine steamers have been captured.

Submarine Situation.

Atlantic:

In the Atlantic Operational Area:	Submarines U "28", U "33", U "41", U "43", U "49".
	U "53" homeward bound.
In the Mediterranean (?)	Submarine U "26"
Outward Bound:	Submarines U "29", U "47".

Submarine U "29" has been informed by the Commander, Submarines of the position of the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet in the North Minch area.

CONFIDENTIAL

17 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

Submarine U "15" reports the completion of her operation off Lowestoft. Submarine U "20" put out for a special operation.

Otherwise nothing to report.

Submarine Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

The Fuehrer having given his consent, the following intensification of the warfare against merchant shipping will be ordered after the measures have been investigated by the Foreign Office:

Submarines will be sanctioned to make immediate use of all weapons against all enemy passenger steamers seen or already known to be armed.

A complete list of armed enemy passenger steamers will be dispatched to the Commander, Submarines in a special teletype.

At noon on 17 Nov. submarine U "53" made the following report:

Convoy of 18 vessels, escort of five destroyers, 60 miles west of Cape da Roca, course 50°, speed 8 knots, formation four columns. The boat has been located by French direction-finding stations and reported by the Admiralty. She maintained contact and again reported at 0300 on 18 Nov. The boat was informed by the Commander, Submarines that submarines U "41" and U "43" might be in the Finisterre area at noon on 18 Nov.

The Commander, Submarines received a directive from the Naval Staff on testing the North Base.

Testing the base by submarine U "36" which will be putting out within the next few days is considered to be an urgent necessity by the Naval Staff. Supplies for the tanker PHOENIZIA in Murmansk will leave for Murmansk on 22 Nov. by fishing vessel.

(For further details of order see War Diary, Part B, Vol. V, page 50).

CONFIDENTIAL

17 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Merchant Shipping 17 Nov.

Loss: The 5,055 **GRT** steamer RHEINGOLD which put out from Bahia on 21 Sept. will have to be given up as lost, bringing German merchant shipping losses up to 23 ships - 2.7 %. The sinking of the British steamer AFRICA SHELL by the GRAF SPEE attracted great attention in the world news. It is claimed that the sinking took place within territorial waters. The GRAF SPEE, which has obviously been listening into the reports, stated that the AFRICA SHELL was blown up seven miles off the coast and must have subsequently drifted.

CONFIDENTIAL

18 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. Report of the Chief, Operations Branch on the battleship operation in accordance with the orders issued by the Commanding Admiral, West on the basis of a directive from the Naval Staff. The operation is to begin on 21 Nov. An operation against merchant shipping with a group of vessels in the Skagerrak is planned to take place simultaneously.

The Chief, Naval Staff fully concurred with the planned course of the operation. (For further details see 21 Nov. and operational order of Commanding Admiral, West).

2. The Chief, Naval Staff consented to completing the Thames minefield with L.M.A. mines as proposed by Group West.

3. In view of the repeated interference, which will have to be sharply rebuffed, with perfectly legal German warfare against merchant shipping in the Baltic Sea by Swedish naval forces and planes, the Foreign Office will have to lodge an even stronger protest to the Swedish Government. The relevant reply will be sent to the Foreign Office.

4. The Commander of the pocket battleship DEUTSCHLAND, Rear Admiral Wenneker, has reported to give an account of the pocket battleships' operation and of certain specific experiences:

The DEUTSCHLAND left according to plan without encountering the enemy. It was unfortunate that owing to the political situation she had to lie low during the first part of the operation, as it prevented the achievement of results against individually routed enemy merchant shipping which could still be successfully attacked at the time. The DEUTSCHLAND's penetration into mid-Atlantic onto the West Indies route did not achieve the desired results. No shipping was sighted as British shipping had been rerouted and transferred to convoys whose routes were unknown. There was only neutral shipping and no British on the Newfoundland Banks and on the North Atlantic route. Very bad weather conditions seriously handicapped the warfare against merchant shipping. Supplies of fuel and provisions were taken on off the coast of Greenland. The Greenland Base is an ideal supply point both as regards weather conditions and the entirely undisturbed and unobserved hideouts (equally suitable for submarines). The homeward passage proceeded according to plan.

CONFIDENTIAL

18 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The WESTERWALD has well proved her efficiency as a supply ship. The support her excellent work gave us deserves special recognition.

(For detailed evaluations of experiences see DEUTSCHLAND's war diary and War Diary, Part C, Vol. I).

Special Reports on the Enemy 18 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

A convoy (presumably HX "9") coming from the west and probably escorted by the RESOLUTION with a cruiser and destroyers was 350 miles west of La Rochelle at 1000 on 18 Nov. Presumably the convoy coming from Boston will be off the Bristol Channel on the evening of 19 Nov. It may be in Liverpool on the evening of 20 Nov., so that the unloading of the convoy is to be anticipated early on the morning of 21 Nov.

The Air Force will try to obtain permission to attack because this is the first important supply of planes from the U.S.A.

Radio monitoring located the cruiser NORFOLK west of the Channel and two auxiliary cruisers in the western part of the Channel.

The aircraft carrier ARGUS and two destroyers put out from Gibraltar making for the east.

According to reports from the Intelligence Center in Spain, patrol duties off Gibraltar are being mainly carried out by two British and two French destroyers and occasionally also by gunboats. PT boats escort convoys as far as Cape Spartel. The Gibraltar harbor defenses have been strengthened; harbor approaches are protected by three nets each.

France:

Nothing to report.

North Sea:

Shipping movements detected by radio monitoring and the extraordinarily busy, partially urgent radio traffic, show that the Thames shipping has been considerably disturbed by our mine-laying operations. The flotilla leader KEITH and some "G" class destroyers are in the Thames-Harwich area. Minesweeping by modern

18 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

minesweeping forces has been observed off the southeast coast of England. According to an agent's report, the Edinburgh channel (Thames) has been closed. Ships are being directed to the northern route (Black Deep) Sunk lightship and from there on an easterly course. It is to be presumed that this warning dates from 17 Nov. or even earlier, so that it cannot have been as a result of the latest German minelaying operations.

Ships from the Downs have to keep east of the line North Goodwin-Kentish Knock-Sunk lightship.

In view of the present minefield situation it is to be expected that further restrictions will soon be imposed on Thames shipping. Towards noon a British steamer struck a mine west of Long Sand buoy (north). The necessary warning was transmitted to all concerned by the radio guard vessel SCAPA.

A British submarine was reported 20 miles north of Borkum. Observations constantly confirmed the suspicions of Radio Intelligence and Radio Deciphering Service of the existence of enemy submarine waiting positions north of Borkum-Norderney as well as west of the center of our declared area.

Baltic Sea:

A Danish motor sailing ship which arrived in Flensburg reported that at 1440 on 17 Nov. she sighted a half submerged submarine of unknown nationality at close range south of Alsen off the entrance to Flensburg **Foerde**. According to investigations made by the Commander, Submarines and Warship Construction Testing Command it is definitely not one of our submarines.

Own Situation 18 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

(See Submarine Warfare Against Merchant Shipping).

The following message was transmitted to the pocket battleship GRAF SPEE for information: "Whaling season officially begins in the Antarctic on 12 Dec. Some boats are likely to arrive before this date."

CONFIDENTIAL

18 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

Destroyer Minelaying Operation III is to be carried out according to plan in the Humber estuary with three destroyers during the night of 18 Nov.

The following results have been obtained from the minelaying operations of the destroyers which were recently carried out undisturbed off the east coast of Britain:

1. Both the Thames approach routes have been blocked with 288 ground mines.
2. The North-South route along the British coast has been blocked near the Humber with 180 ground mines.
3. The Humber estuary has been blocked with 70 ground mines. In many cases it was possible to make a definite assessment of the direct results of the minelaying operations and in others to a high degree of probability. The fact that chiefly neutral shipping appears to be affected may be explained by the fact that Britain does not generally speaking announce her losses, thus giving the impression that neutral shipping is the chief victim of German naval warfare.

It may be safely assumed that at least an equal number of British ships have been sunk by mines. The indirect results are more difficult to assess as such varied factors have contributed to them. But they are without question even greater than the direct results.

The Thames (London) for instance brings in at least a quarter of the total imports.

The east coast ports, in particular, play an important part in the handling of vital raw materials for war and for manufactured goods - iron ore, wood and mineral oil. Because these ports have specialized in certain goods, any traffic diversions would create many difficulties.

From what has been so far detected of countermeasures against our ground mines, the enemy has clearly been taken by surprise by these weapons and also by the way in which they have been used. Enemy reaction has taken the form of warning shipping in areas where actual losses have been established, ostensibly caused by mines. In no instance up to now has the enemy after having swept an area declared it free to shipping again as would in particular be expected off a port.

CONFIDENTIAL

18 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

It is to be assumed that the enemy is not or is not yet sufficiently prepared to begin taking really vigorous countermeasures against ground mines. If the measure of their threat to the enemy is judged from our own ground mine fighting problems, an approximately correct picture should be gained of the sort of weapon we have in the ground mine. We must, therefore, maintain the advantages this means to German naval warfare with ruthless intensity by making use of all the means at our disposal, including granting priority to raw material allotments and production.

The novelty of the ground mine as a weapon of naval warfare, and the lack of efficient enemy countermeasures against it, justify questioning the wisdom of having launched this weapon now rather than having awaited a suitable moment for a large-scale surprise operation. The Naval Staff considered it necessary to use this weapon from the very outbreak of the war for the following reasons:

1. Whether the enemy had ground mines or not was admittedly not known, but as it was to be assumed that he too, had made important progress in this field since World War I, there was the danger that one day he might take the initiative in ground mine operations, thus making it impossible for us to use them.
2. How the war will develop remains to be seen. It was **basically** to be insisted on that so long as the opportunity at all existed of bringing the ground mine into action against the enemy, it was to be seized. This was especially true of ground mines laid by submarines as it could in no way be guaranteed that in view of the strong enemy anti-submarine defenses the possibility would still exist later on.
3. The enemy efforts to protect his coast and his coastal routes with extensive flanking minefields and declared areas are easily discernible. The fact that by continuing to wait, the possibilities of laying ground mines from surface forces along the British coast - that is to say up to the river estuaries - might no longer exist had to be taken into account.
4. In view of the discussions on the further intensification of economic warfare against Britain, the present moment seemed particularly propitious for an intensification of minelaying operations by destroyers because far-reaching disturbances of merchant shipping on the east coast and in the Thames are ideal for frightening the neutrals off from continuing to trade with Britain.
5. Even if the enemy does know how this mine works, which may well be the case, if he has really been caught fully unprepared by this unsweepable mine it will be a long time before he succeeds in developing a suitable sweeping gear for it. It is thought that this

CONFIDENTIAL

18 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

period will last so long that the enemy will meanwhile have suffered very heavy losses **through our intensified use of all possible means of mine warfare** and that he will also have suffered extremely heavy curtailments in his trade with the neutrals.

Air reconnaissance of the southern part of the North Sea did not sight the enemy at all except for some French heavy fighters. Numerous fishing vessels and other merchant shipping were, however, observed.

On 18 Nov. two He 115 planes were attacked ten miles west of Helder presumably by a Dutch plane. The attack was answered by three bursts of machine-gun fire and then our planes withdrew out to sea. The incident definitely took place outside Dutch territorial waters. The Commander-in-Chief, Air Force has instructed the Air Force Attaché to lodge strong protests against this attack and added that Dutch neutrality may well have been violated by a British plane.

Baltic Sea:

Submarine chasing by submarine chasers and planes has achieved no further results in Kiel Bay up to now.

New disturbances have taken place in the warfare against merchant shipping with minelayers supported by the Naval Air Force as a result of neutrality law infringements by Swedish destroyers.

Three whalers are to be commissioned as the submarine chasers HANS, IDA, and KARL for Baltic Sea operations.

According to a report from the Naval Attaché in Copenhagen, the Danish Naval Staff and Government have shown great understanding for the German requests for the complete blocking of the Belts. The Danish Navy is extremely grateful for the way in which the matter has been handled and also for being given the opportunity to approach their Government themselves. The Danes have agreed in principle to laying the minefields the way we wanted them. A four-fold, fully active staircase minefield is planned in order to secure an effective long lasting blocking. The blocking of the Great Belt should be started on 20 Nov. As an immediate precaution until the whole minefield is fully active, Denmark will employ a group of small torpedo boats in the territorial waters of both the Great and Little Belts for patrolling against submerged submarines.

The reports of the Naval Attaché on the Swedish minefields in the Sound appear to be equally favorable. The Chief of the Swedish Naval Staff has announced his readiness to comply with German wishes. The Swedish Government has decided to lay a minefield south

CONFIDENTIAL

18 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

of Falsterbo up to the German Sound minefield. The Swedish Ambassador will inform the German Government on 19 Nov. Further details are expected.

Submarine Situation 18 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

Submarine U "35" put out for the operational area. Submarine U "49" reported firing a fan against three steamers (tanker and transports) 150 miles southwest of **Fast-**net; the torpedoes seem to have missed owing to the bad weather (WSW, strength 5, misty).

Submarine U "53" is still maintaining contact with the convoy west of Cape Villano. The Commander, Submarines has ordered the submarine to report more frequently until submarines U "41" and U "43" have been brought in, and to attack herself on the morning of 19 Nov. at the latest. According to a radio monitoring report, the boat was sighted presumably by the **flotilla** leader VOLTA.

North Sea:

After having carried out the minelaying operation according to plan, submarine U "15" put into Wilhelmshaven.

Submarine U "66" has started on her homeward passage from the operational area off the Norwegian coast.

Submarine U "22" has reported the sinking of a steamer and the firing of two unsuccessful torpedoes. (Operational area off Kinnaird Head).

Merchant Shipping 18 Nov.

One steamer has returned home from overseas. One steamer, the TOGO, previously reported lost, has proceeded from overseas as far as Norway. On 14 Nov. the steamer TRIFELS was allegedly captured by a French vessel.

CONFIDENTIAL

18 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The two cruisers of the 2nd Cruiser Squadron which were on the Northern Patrol together are now operating with some older "D" class cruisers on the Iceland route. It appears that by reason of the ever increasing reports on the departures of German ships from neutral Atlantic ports — these straits have of late been particularly thoroughly and carefully patrolled. Denmark Strait is being patrolled by auxiliary cruisers which captured some German steamers that did not scuttle themselves in time.

The activities of the vessels operating on the Northern Patrol are actively supported by air reconnaissance which surveys the sea area both in the direction of the Faroes and also towards the Norwegian coast.

According to a report issued by the Reich Ministry of Food, the first two fishing vessels from Iceland will arrive in Cuxhaven on 20/21 Nov. Six further fishing vessels are also expected. The steamers have been ordered to sail to Cuxhaven via the Kattegat, the Sound, and the Kiel Canal.

It is anticipated that the failure of the potato crops in Britain this year will result in larger potato imports from Denmark and the Baltic Countries than usual.

As Denmark herself exports potatoes, it can be safely assumed that any potato deliveries bound for Denmark are actually bound for Britain. From previous experience, British potato imports usually begin in the second half of November.

The Consul in Trondheim made the following report by telephone:

"The supply ship WESTERWALD was stopped in Norwegian territorial waters by a Norwegian torpedo boat. When the commanding officer of the search party came aboard he saw that the ship was armed and demanded the right of search. The captain of the WESTERWALD refused, pointing out that the guns were only for defense purposes and could not be fired straight ahead. Furthermore Consul Nolda also emphasized that he had observed similar armed British merchantmen in Norwegian waters several times. The right of search was nevertheless maintained. The captain of the WESTERWALD would first of all like to have orders from the Naval Staff. The ship is allowed to receive messages but not to transmit any.

CONFIDENTIAL

18 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The Norwegian Foreign Office explained to the German Minister that the Norwegian Government had to insist on the ship being searched and would enforce its right if necessary. The Minister asked for the postponement of this measure until the German Government had been informed.

The following radio message was transmitted to the WESTERWALD:

"WESTERWALD is Government ship in service of Navy. Therefore refuse right of search. Request immediate release to continue voyage. Oslo Legation will inform Norwegian Government.
Naval Staff."

The necessary steps were at the same time taken by the German Legation in Oslo which demanded the immediate release of the WESTERWALD on the grounds of her being a Government ship.

In view of this fact the WESTERWALD was allowed to proceed.

19 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

The Chief, Naval Staff brought up the question of whether the LUETZOW should participate in the battleship operation. He felt that the advantages of her participation lay in the fact that the light cruisers backed by the pocket battleship would together form a unit able to withstand any enemy combination of cruisers, a factor of very great importance to the activities of the light naval vessels.

In addition to this, Group East was requested to examine whether the pocket battleship could still now be integrated into the operation, especially as regards the requirements of anti-submarine defense.

The LUETZOW (Gdynia) was ordered to maintain sufficient operational and action readiness for the execution of a short operation and to report when she would be operational and also any restrictions in her action readiness.

LUETZOW's answer was as follows: "Ready from 19 Nov. 0800. Maximum speed 24 knots as one main engine has broken down."

On the basis of a message from Group West, stating that there will be no need for the pocket battleship to arrive on the Jade roadstead earlier than on the forenoon of 23 Nov. in order to be available to take the battleships under escort at the end of the operation, the LUETZOW was ordered by teletype to make every effort to restore her operational readiness. Shipyard personnel will be sent there immediately if necessary.

At 1650 the LUETZOW reported as follows: Will be on Jade roadstead on forenoon of 23 Nov. Restoration to full operational readiness definitely possible with our own resources. Help of shipyard repair shops not required. But the emittance of sparks visible up to 5,000 meters cannot be eliminated by 23 Nov. Group West will be informed accordingly.

From a questionnaire issued by the British Intelligence Service dated 31 Oct. which we discovered, it appears that Great Britain does not know where our battleships are berthed. The questions put ran as follows:

- "1. Find out where the German battleships are lying.
2. British Intelligence Service has learned that Germany purchased some submarines in Russia. These boats - 14 in all - are

19 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

said to have already passed through the Kiel Canal. Find out whether this is correct or not.

3. Find out whether the slipway built at the Stettin - Oder works is number 4 or 5.

4. Is there evidence that Swinemuende has become a strategically important harbor?

5. Find out the spirit prevailing aboard German warships and merchantmen and report the ones where feeling is against the war. The British agent added that the British would treat such crews well should they be captured.

6. Keep Stettin under particularly close observation, because various matters of strategic importance are said to be in progress there.

7. Discovering the destination of the cargoes waiting to leave Riga is less important than ascertaining the amount of cargoes, especially of food, going from Riga to Germany."

Special Reports on the Enemy 19 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

According to a report from the Naval Attaché in Washington, the British battle cruisers were always sighted proceeding singly off the Canadian coast. It is assumed that from time to time one of these ships together with destroyers and other vessels escorts the convoys. On approaching European ports these heavy ships leave the convoy and are replaced by destroyers and planes. The Canadian convoy allegedly sails at least once a week in a strength of up to 60 ships.

Shipping movements and positions: On 17 Nov. the cruiser DESPATCH was in Callao. Two British cruisers and one auxiliary cruiser were reported in Denmark Strait. The cruisers DIOMEDES and CERES received a radiogram from the Commanding Officer of the Northern Patrol which referred to a German steamer.

According to reports from the Intelligence Center in Spain, Mediterranean convoys have of late often been escorted by submarines.

CONFIDENTIAL

19 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The Attaché in Tokyo reported that the 21,500 ton British passenger steamer EMPRESS OF CANADA is equipped with two torpedo tubes as well as with 3.15 cm guns and anti-aircraft guns and has regular naval officers and trained gun crews aboard.

North Sea:

British broadcasting stations **sent** out warnings to all ships against approaching Ratray Head (Moray Firth). The lifeboat which put out yesterday evening to investigate — a detonation out at sea (operational area of submarines U "18" and U "22") would seem to be connected with this.

Our minefields have resulted in several enemy and neutral steamers striking mines north of Spurn lightship and east of Tongue lightship, including the Dutch 8,309 GRT passenger steamer SIMON BOLIVAR, the Italian steamer GRAZIA, a Swedish, a Yugoslav, and a Japanese one.

A statement from the British Admiralty asserts that minelaying without previous warning in fairways frequently used by British and neutral shipping is not in accordance with international procedure and international law. The mines are said to have been laid by submarines.

The extraordinarily strong deterring effect that the German mines in the Thames are having is in the opinion of the Naval Staff an excellent opportunity for once more pointing out to the neutrals the great danger to which they will be exposing their merchant shipping if they do not warn it away from British waters. The proclamation of a war zone by the United States in order to escape shipping losses in European waters and being involved in the conflict should also be mentioned. The message to the neutrals must in no way imply that the shipping losses off the British coast are being caused by German mines as this could be interpreted as a German effort to justify her policy. On the contrary, the German Government must appear to be giving the neutrals disinterested, friendly advice by pointing out the inevitable results of the precautionary measures which both sides have to take in an operational area in modern warfare, and hinting that in the interests of their own security, they would be well advised to avoid the war zone altogether.

Own Situation 19 Nov.

Atlantic:

See Submarine Situation .

CONFIDENTIAL

19 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

The minelaying operation off the Humber (4th Destroyer Flotilla) was carried out according to plan. All the vessels which participated will be returning to the river estuaries in the course of 19 Nov.

Baltic Sea:

Submarine chasing in Kiel Bay has so far been without result. On 20 Nov. freedom of action for exercises in the Baltic Sea will be granted to small naval vessels up to the size of destroyers.

Warfare against merchant shipping by minelayers supported by the Air Force led to the capture of several steamers in the central and eastern parts of the Baltic Sea.

It was learned from forces engaged in the warfare against merchant shipping and operating in the Sound, that shipping is discharging some of its cargo and sailing almost exclusively through Kogrund Channel.

There is only southward-bound traffic outside territorial waters. Furthermore, Swedish destroyers and planes are trying to disrupt merchant shipping control and to provoke German forces by deliberately tactless behavior. A Swedish helicopter equipped with a camera has been circling the German vessels. Group East has ordered that if **the plane** persists, due warning is to be given to the Swedish patrol boats in the neighbourhood and then C/30 machine-gun exercises are to be carried out.

It was furthermore reported that the British steamers **have evidently** been repainted and **are** now sailing under Swedish colors.

Submarine Situation:

Atlantic:

Outward bound: Submarine U "31".

In the operational area: Submarines U "26", U "28", U "33", U "41", U "43", U "49", U "53" in the Atlantic.

CONFIDENTIAL

19 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Off the northern coast of Norway: Submarine U "38".

Outward bound: Submarine U "47" in the northern part of the North Sea.

Submarine U "29" west of the Hebrides.

Submarine U "26" reported that she had not carried out her task off Gibraltar. The submarine has started on her homeward passage. She is lying near Cape Santa Maria. Submarine U "49" fired on the 7,016 ton steamer ROTHESAY CASTLE escorted by two British destroyers, without result.

Submarine U "53" is continuing to maintain contact with the convoy with dogged determination. On 17 Nov. she was so close that she was, however, unable to fire, for fear of being rammed and was compelled to dive at the beginning of an attack on 18 Nov. Two detonations were heard after a fan was fired. Submarine U "53" was ordered to send out a direction finding signal in order to bring up the other submarines but she lost contact on the evening of 19 Nov. (100 miles northwest of Cape Ortegal). Contact was transferred to submarine U "41" and was resumed by submarine U "53" at 0200 on 20 Nov. The boats were located several times. The Commander-in-Chief, Western Approaches and the Commander-in-Chief, North Atlantic have been informed that the destroyer GALANT and probably two more destroyers are being sent out for a submarine chase.

Merchant Shipping 19 Nov.

There are now a total of 257 ships = 65.5 %. Of these 15 ships = 83,593 **GRT** are on the Norwegian route. Losses to date = 23 ships = 2.7 %.

On 18 Nov. 1939 the German consul in Reykjavik made the following report: At 1400 hours an **SOS** was picked up; position 6400 N, 2630 W; only three full words "British auxiliary cruiser"; ship's name not given. Two British destroyers and an auxiliary cruiser in Denmark Strait. According to dead reckoning it may be the 5,178 ton Hamburg-South America steamer ENTRERIOS.

Shipping in Hamburg in Oct. 1939.

(According to a report by the Reich Ministry of Transportation)

19 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Ships entering and leaving Hamburg:

Entering	Oct. 1914:	55 ships equalling	21,562	GRT
"	Oct. 1939:	706 ships equalling	341,086	GRT
Leaving	Oct. 1914:	80 ships equalling	23,717	GRT
"	Oct. 1939:	709 ships equalling	283,957	GRT

Coal and coke imports to Norway on British ships:

(From a report from a consulate in Norway)

At the beginning of the war the British Government immediately tried to put pressure on Norway by stating that it was very doubtful whether it would be possible to export sufficient British coal. Thereupon we informed the Norwegian Government that we would be able to deliver sufficient quantities of coal and coke. Immediately the British reduced their prices which had in the interim risen very considerably and announced themselves able to meet the required deliveries, with the result that both in September and October British coal deliveries were more than twice their normal ones. These large British coal exports to Norway are obviously the result of British economic pressure on her. The railroads and the industries depending on coal will presumably be refused it if they transport or deliver goods for Germany. This unfortunate situation is unquestionably to be blamed on the clumsiness of our own negotiations. We promised coal from the eastern part of Upper Silesia long before Britain was able or willing to deliver any. But so much time elapsed between the promise and the actual deliveries that Britain was able to push in.

CONFIDENTIAL

20 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance.

1. The sinking of the Dutch passenger steamer SIMON BOLIVAR which struck a mine was made great use of for propaganda purposes in British and partly also in neutral newspapers (particularly Swedish newspapers).

The Dutch simply reported the bare facts and left the question of whether it was a German or British mine open.

The Naval Staff felt that our own propaganda machine should have gone into action more quickly and with greater vigor.

2. In connection with the sinking of the SIMON BOLIVAR, the first British press reports mainly stressed how justified Britain would now be in intensifying her economic warfare against the German export trade as "a reprisal against the violation of international law by Germany!"

3. According to the press, the British Government has informed the League of Nations of the annulment of the following treaties for an unlimited period:

a. The Naval Armaments Treaty of 25 Mar. 1936 between the United States, France, Great Britain, Italy, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and India.

b. The Naval Treaty between Great Britain and Soviet Russia of 17 June 1937.

c. The Naval Treaty between Great Britain and Poland of 27 April 1938.

4. The Swedish Ambassador declared that Sweden is in principle willing to meet the German wish to block the Sound. Sweden is, however, trying to co-ordinate the decision on this question with the economic negotiations now in progress between Germany and Sweden.

For the German economic warfare situation as it stood on 1 Nov. 1939 see Economic Warfare Situation Report No. 2 in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V, page 53.

Special Reports on the Enemy 20 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

CONFIDENTIAL

20 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

An agent's report from Britain mentions the extraordinarily bad effect which the introduction of convoys has had on the British railroads, as the ships all arrive at the same time and are partly discharged in ports which were normally not used.

The consul in Reykjavik made the following report:

One British cruiser and two auxiliary cruisers were sailing in Denmark Strait, and during bad weather in Adalvik and Hornvik.

The Spanish Naval Staff informed the Naval Attaché of observations which revealed that the British propose to make part of their steamers sail under the Eire flag.

France:

On 18 Nov. the battleship LORRAINE and two light cruisers passed Gibraltar making for the west.

(Transmitted to GRAF SPEE)

North Sea:

Radio monitoring detected destroyer and cruiser movements including the SOUTHAMPTON and BELFAST and the anti-aircraft cruiser COVENTRY.

At 1500 three battleships were detected in the Clyde by air reconnaissance on a southerly course. In view of recent observations, they must be the NELSON, RODNEY, and HOOD.

An enemy submarine was located and attacked north of Norderney. The results are not yet clearly known.

According to an enemy broadcast, more than 26,000 tons of shipping have been lost through mines off the east coast of England during the last three days.

The air reconnaissance and photographic reconnaissance of the Xth Air Corps revealed the following facts:

1. Scapa 1300, altitude 6,000 meters: the IRON DUKE presumably beached but under steam south of Ore near (south of) Lines. Two "Y"-class destroyers at anchor east of Lines. One steamer is lying at the quay off Lines. Badly aimed anti-aircraft **gunfire** from warships and from the region west of Rinne Hill.

CONFIDENTIAL

20 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

2. Moray Firth 1300: No ships, no anti-aircraft.
3. Loch Ewe: ten tenths cloud, ceiling 800 meters, observations impossible.
4. Firth of Clyde 1320: three battleships in grid square AM 6287 east of the Isle of Arran, course 180°, high speed, no anti-aircraft, altitude 3,000 meters.
5. Brisk shipping traffic off Kinnaird Head on southwesterly and northwesterly courses.
6. At 1225 twelve merchantmen were sailing along the coast on a southerly course off Stonehaven.

Photographic reconnaissance of the air reconnaissance group attached to the Commander-in-Chief, Air Force made the following observations:

Dover: 4 destroyers, presumably BROKE class.
8 auxiliary minesweepers (fishing vessels).
2 1,000 - 3,000 GRT freighters.
2 1,850 ton submarines.

Net barrage presumably intended to close the entrance.

Between Deal and St. Margaret's:

68 freighters	350,000	GRT
1 passenger merchantman	11,500	GRT
2 passenger steamers	40,000	GRT
3 tankers	24,000	GRT
1 sailing ship		
6 fishing vessels	approximately 2,000	GRT.

Own Situation 20 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report. For submarines see Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

The supply ship WESTERWALD is returning from Kopervik through the Skagerrak. Group East and the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic have been ordered to take her under escort through the Great Belt. The WESTERWALD will be informed by radio of the Danish blocking measures within the Great Belt territorial waters between 54° 47'

CONFIDENTIAL

20 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

and 54° 51' N which begin tonight. She will be taken under escort by our own forces at 2100 at 270° three miles off.

North Sea:

The LMA mines were first used by a squadron of He "59" planes over the Thames and Harwich. LMA mines will be dropped over: North Thames (2), South Thames (4), Downs (2), and Harwich (1).

The patrol boat "209" (Commander: Lieutenant (s.g.) R. Auerbach) sank 56 miles northwest of Heligoland after a mine or torpedo explosion.

Thorough investigations are being made into the cause.

Otherwise nothing to report. No air reconnaissance owing to the **weather**.

Three more submarine chasers (whalers) will be put into commission for **duty** in the North Sea.

In order if necessary to be able to recall all available fully operational ships from their proposed operations to go and take the returning battleships under escort, the pocket battleship ADMIRAL SCHEER was ordered to restore her operational readiness as far as her present action readiness will allow.

From 22 Nov. onwards Group West will be given the right to resort to the SCHEER for supporting Commanding Admiral, West should an unforeseen situation demand the co-operation of the SCHEER despite her reduced speed (21 knots) in order to bring the operation to a successful conclusion. (Group East and Commanding Admiral, West received the same order).

Group West reported the cutting of the Esbjerg-Northern France cable.

Baltic Sea:

There was unsuccessful submarine chase by submarine chasers and planes in Kiel Bay. Divers have examined the spots where submarines were fought but so far without result.

The minefield patrol in the Belts and off Gjedser will be reinforced by submarine chasers and PT boats. The Naval Staff pointed out to Group East that with the

CONFIDENTIAL

20 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

publication of Danish blocking measures today, the evening of 20 Nov., quick exits of British submarines from the Baltic Sea **are** to be anticipated.

Defense measures in the Baltic Sea have been subdivided into the following areas:

Commander, Patrol Forces, East: Sectional Commander, West: Defense of the **coastal** waters of the western part of the Baltic Sea from the Little Belt up to Drasser Ort.

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic: Central section from Drasser Ort to Grosshorst, including the Sound and the Kattegat.

Commander, Minesweepers, Baltic: Sectional Commander, East: Defense of **coastal** waters from Grosshorst to Memel.

The Sectional Commanders will be responsible for the following duties: patrol duties, minefield patrols, control of channels, defense of naval communications, submarine **chase**.

Submarine Situation.

Atlantic:

Submarine U "31" turned about owing to a breakdown. She will return to Wilhelmshaven. Otherwise nothing to report. Commander, Submarines transmitted the position of the three British battleships detected in the Clyde to submarines U "28", U "29", U "33".

North Sea:

Submarine U "19" has returned from a special operation.

Submarines U "13", U "22", U "57", U "20" are in the North Sea operational area.

Submarines U "18", U "60" are homeward bound.

Submarine Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

Atlantic:

The British 4,258 ton steamer PENSYLVA has been sunk.

CONFIDENTIAL

20 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

A lifeboat of the 4,915 ton steamer ARLINGTON COURT has been picked up 150 miles west of Brest.

(They are possibly successes of submarine U "53").

Submarine U "41" maintained contact with the convoy sailing 160 miles west of La Rochelle up to 1900, when she was forced away by a French destroyer. Submarine U "43" is nine miles ahead of the convoy and plans to attack at dawn on 21 Nov.

North Sea:

Submarine U "18" **sank** two tankers off Kinnaird Head. Submarine U "57" sank two steamers in the area of Nord Hinder.

Merchant Shipping 20 Nov.

Own Shipping:

On the basis of the recent experiences of returning merchantmen and the prevailing impression that recent losses are to be ascribed to the fact that steamers are sailing too near the coast of Iceland, the following Warning Report No. 104 will be transmitted to the German organizations involved:

"On the homeward passage through the North Atlantic keep west of 30° W if possible, make for southern tip of Greenland, hug the coast of Greenland until approximately 69° N, then make for Norway."

Stronger enemy patrols are definitely to be anticipated north and south of Iceland. But the passage through Denmark Strait, keeping as close to the ice limits as possible, still offers the best chances of slipping through unnoticed.

Foreign Shipping:

For an evaluation of the enemy and neutral merchant shipping movements observed, and records of statements on contraband and transit trade see Radio Monitoring Report: Foreign Merchant Shipping No. 1/39.

The following report from the German representative in Lisbon on the indirect effect of our mine and submarine warfare should be mentioned:

CONFIDENTIAL

20 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

"Neutral crews have been repeatedly refusing to sail from Lisbon to the north owing to the great danger there. Thus, according to press reports, 46 **crew members of Greek ships in the harbor** yesterday left Gibraltar for home by land for precisely this reason."

According to the report of the captain of a Danish steamer, four Norwegian steamers loaded with wood pulp for England are lying at anchor in Oslo Fiord near Kahl Island because it has been impossible to find crews to man them.

Denmark has officially announced the laying of minefields across both the Belts between Langeland and Naaland and between Alsen and Aeros in order to improve the protection of her territorial waters. A third blockade is said to have been created off the western approaches to Smaaland fairway.

The Danish Navy began minelaying on the evening of 20 Nov.

(For an account of the merchant shipping which passed through the Danish mine channels during World War I see Part B, Vol. V, page 54. For a survey of the present Danish minefield see Part C, Vol. VI, Mine Warfare).

21 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. Contrary to the opinion prevailing on the strength of the prewar assessment made of Great Britain, recent developments have revealed very important operational possibilities and shown that owing to the enemy's complete lack of initiative and the purely defensive attitude so far maintained, it should be possible for both light and heavy forces to be brought into action throughout the North Sea and the Skagerrak with greater intensity than ever imagined before. Great Britain has recognized the Atlantic and no longer the North Sea to be the focal point of all her naval warfare, and in all theaters solely confines herself to the protection of her merchant shipping. German naval warfare will have to launch the most vigorous and ruthless offensive against this British policy despite the fact that its forces are far weaker.

As there is no hope of our submarines being able to bring British west coast trade to a halt or of carrying out large-scale minelaying operations with surface vessels and planes, German Naval Staff's next task in the North Sea should be the subjection of the vitally important east coast ports to a total blockade.

As a contribution towards this aim, the Chief, Naval Staff considers the effect of our minelaying operations along the east coast and especially in the Thames area to be extraordinarily important and of as yet unpredictable consequence. Advantage should be taken of recent successes and of the known weakness of the enemy there, to continue the rapid expansion of our east coast minelaying operations by utilizing all available surface vessels, submarines, and planes. Despite the difficulty of the task, a further west coast submarine minelaying operation should be attempted at the same time.

2. The Chief, Naval Staff has ordered that press and radio announcements etc. are **hereafter** to be made to imply that the mines off the British coast are all of British origin. The question as to whether German or British mines are involved should no longer be discussed but the keynote of German propaganda should be warning neutral powers against the operational areas in which all the weapons of modern warfare are being used by both opponents.

In other words, the responsibility for this situation which strongly affects neutral interests, should be placed on the enemy.

3. Report on the operational orders for submarines ready to put out:

CONFIDENTIAL

21 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

submarines U "31", and U "35" will be assigned to the area south of Ireland and west of the English Channel for the following operations:

Attacking enemy warships (destroyers only if accurate firing data available), sinking all enemy merchantmen without warning, sinking all ships which are allowed to be sunk in accordance with the standing orders to commanders. Warfare against merchant shipping outside the North Sea will handle neutrals in accordance with prize law. Co-operation with other boats is to be recommended.

4. For the report on Fuehrer Directive No. 8 (see Directive 8 OKW/WFA 213 Gkdos. Chfs.).

Special Items.

a. Readiness for operation "Yellow" must be maintained for the present in order to be able to take immediate advantage of favorable weather conditions. Operations should be so planned that the attack could if necessary be postponed at the eleventh hour. (Key words: "Rhein", "Elbe").

b. Although it is at present difficult to ascertain the Dutch attitude, measures against the Netherlands have been sanctioned because hostility is definitely to be anticipated.

c. The Navy's assignment remains the same. In addition to the measures against Belgium and contrary to former directives, measures have also been sanctioned against the Netherlands. Active measures against Dutch naval forces are only to be taken should they take a hostile attitude. Wherever required, the Navy will guarantee to man the batteries for the coastal defenses of the Dutch islands.

As usual the Navy has pledged itself not to sanction blockade measure by submarines before the night prior to zero hour, but indeed only as shortly before zero hour as possible; and furthermore blockade measures by surface forces and planes must not be sanctioned before the Army's zero hour.

Items of Political Importance 21 Nov.

Amongst the measures to be taken by British economic warfare, Mr. Chamberlain announced in the House of Commons that the exporting of goods of German origin or of German manufacture would also no longer be tolerated by the British Government and that special steps would be taken against it. Great Britain is justifying the intensification of her warfare against merchant shipping

CONFIDENTIAL

21 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

by calling it a reprisal against illegal German submarine and mine warfare.

This British step had been anticipated for a long time. It will meet with strong neutral opposition but that, however, is hardly likely to disturb Great Britain. The consequences of the proposed British measure must be thoroughly and speedily examined in conjunction with the Armed Forces High Command, the Special Staff for Mercantile and Economic Warfare, the Foreign Office, and the Deputy for the German Economy in order to be able to lay down the nature and scale of German countermeasures.

(For press comments on German naval warfare methods and on the proposed British export restrictions, see the Foreign Press).

British economic warfare is being supported in an exemplary manner by a very well run information bureau, functioning all over the world, for collecting and controlling news. The experience gained from our own recent economic warfare measures has clearly shown that our own German information **bureaus** abroad are still not entirely adequate, a situation which must be remedied as quickly as possible if we are to make a success of our economic warfare. The Naval Intelligence Division is trying to expand the already existing organization to make it capable of working on tasks of wider scope. (The demands that the Operations Division, Naval Staff would make on this organization will be submitted in writing to the Intelligence Division, Naval Staff. See War Diary, Vol. XII, Economic Warfare).

Special Information on the Enemy 21 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

A report from the Attaché in Copenhagen has confirmed the former observations made on the control of the area around Iceland by large armed merchantmen and auxiliary cruisers.

The cruiser SHROPSHIRE was again detected in the South African area. The retransfer of the cruiser is presumably to be ascribed to the appearance of the GRAF SPEE in the Indian Ocean.

On 21 Nov. a convoy of eight tankers and five freighters put into Gibraltar coming from the east.

CONFIDENTIAL

21 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

France:

Radio monitoring detected air reconnaissance in the Channel and along the west coast (in connection with the taking under escort of a convoy to the Gironde). Five destroyers escorted the convoy. The 4th Submarine Division is northwest of the Bay of Biscay. The 6th Flotilla Leader Division is in Brest.

North Sea:

The results of mine warfare on 21 Nov. exceeded 20,000 tons. They included the 11,900 ton Japanese steamer TERUKUNI-MARU and the 6,600 ton Italian steamer FIANONA.

Enemy uncertainty about the situation off the Thames and Humber is due to the fact that all foreign shipping has been warned to approach the British east coast between 51° 20' and 54° N at night.

British air reconnaissance over the Thames estuary suggests that the enemy still anticipates the possibility of submarines appearing in this area for minelaying operations.

The British 490 ton minesweeper MASTIFF struck a mine and sank.

In the Hoofden our air reconnaissance sighted two groups of two destroyers each and thinks it has detected battleships and cruisers in Wide Firth (Orkneys). (The report of battleships is very doubtful and unlikely).

The radio picture revealed that the cruiser BELFAST probably had an accident in the Firth of Forth and was damaged. The report is still unconfirmed. The ship possibly struck a mine.

Own Situation 21 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

See: Submarine Situation.

CONFIDENTIAL

21 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

On the afternoon of 21 Nov. the battleships SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU put out to sea for operations in accordance with Operational Order No. 4 of the Commanding Admiral, West: Sweep into the Iceland-Faeroes area under the command of the Commanding Admiral, West: Vice Admiral Marschall. The Commanding Admiral, West has planned the battleship operation as follows:

"In accordance with the orders issued by the Commander-in-Chief, Navy with the object of threatening the North Atlantic routes in order to tie down the enemy naval forces there still further, I intend to make a surprise advance with the battleships into the Iceland-Faeroes area, to head for the suspected enemy guard line, to **steer deceptive courses so as to make the enemy believe** that the battleships are about to make a thrust into the North Atlantic, and then to return to home waters at top speed by making a detour far to the north and taking advantage of the long nights.

Warfare against merchant shipping will be undertaken by the cruisers LEIPZIG and KOELN with destroyers in the central part of the Baltic Sea and in the Skagerrak under command of the Commanding Admiral, Scouting Force in conjunction with the battleship sweep and also to divert attention from it.

For further details see the directive of the Naval Staff, the operational order of the Commanding Admiral, West and the operational order of the Commanding Admiral, Scouting Force. For the execution of the operation see War Diary, Part B, Vol. II North Sea Warfare).

Baltic Sea:

Submarine chasing in the western part of the Baltic Sea was without result. Thereupon Group East again sanctioned exercises taking place in the Baltic Sea but the need for submarine defenses was stressed.

Warfare against merchant shipping in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea is being waged by the TANNENBERG and HANSESTADT DANZIG, in the Sound by the 11th Minesweeper Flotilla, and north of **Gotland** by the motor minesweeper "11" in collaboration with planes. Five steamers have been brought in for investigation.

According to a report from the Group, new incidents with Swedish naval forces occurred in the course of the warfare against merchant shipping in the eastern part of the Baltic Sea, Aland Sea, and the Sound. These forces are trying to disturb German warfare against

21 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

merchant shipping in a most unprecedented manner and to assert their claim to the four mile limit. (For further details see Situation Baltic Sea 22 Nov.) It is indeed only thanks to the yielding and considerate behavior of the German forces that they desisted from taking direct action.

The Chief, Naval Staff has ordered that **hereafter** ruthless action will be taken against Swedish forces which are causing so much trouble to our perfectly legal control of merchant shipping.

As regards the minefields in the Danish Belt, our forces have been informed that for the time being the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic will establish a minefield pilot service for German ships only until the question of a joint pilot service has been settled. The control of mine channels is to be carried out south of the minefields and outside the territorial waters by forces of the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic.

Submarine Situation.

Atlantic:

Submarines U "31" and U "48" are leaving for the Atlantic operational area. Submarine U "53" has begun her return passage owing to lack of fuel (eleven torpedoes are still on board). After having sunk five fishing vessels belonging to the patrol of the northern entrance to the Channel, submarine U "33" started on her return passage.

Submarine U "49" reported that her bow torpedo tube and periscope had been damaged by a depth charge; her diving ability was restricted but she could still shadow. Commanding Admiral, Submarines has ordered her to return.

Only submarines U "41", U "43" now remain in the Atlantic operational area. **As their fuel supply permits,** they have been ordered to operate in the area west of the Channel up to 12° W.

So far there is no news of submarine U "28" which was sent out for minelaying operations off Swansea. Submarine U "26" is on her return passage.

CONFIDENTIAL

21 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Making for the Operational Area:

Submarine U "35" north of the Shetlands.

Submarine U "47" northwest of the Shetlands.

In view of the enemy operations to be expected in connection with our battleship operations, the boats have been ordered to take up attack positions west of the Fair Isle channel, and north of North Minch, respectively.

Submarine U "29" is bound for the Milford Haven special operation.

Submarine U "38" is operating off the northern part of the Norwegian coast.

North Sea:

Submarine U "60" has put in, submarines U "18" and U "57" are homeward bound.

Submarines U "13", U "22", U "20" are still in the operational area.

Merchant Shipping 21 Nov.

The consul in Reykjavik reported the sinking of the 4,110 **GRT** steamer BERTHA FISSER southeast of Iceland on 21 Nov. The consul furthermore reported the following radiogram:

"SOS 65° 25' N, 25° 40' W Bunar. We are sinking chased by men of war. (Rendered in original . **Tr. note**) May the Fuehrer and Greater Germany be victorious."

At 1735 on 21 Nov. the steamer ADOLF WOERMANN made the following report: "Am escorted by British auxiliary cruiser 12° S, 3° W." and at 2120: "Armed British merchantman WAIMARAMA trying to stop us. But are proceeding on westerly course."

As the British ship has a speed of 17 1/2 knots and the ADOLF WOERMANN only 12 knots, our ship has but little chance of escaping the shadower.

CONFIDENTIAL

21 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Merchant shipping received the following Warning
Report No. 24 from the Naval Staff by radio and cable:

"In bad weather British auxiliary cruisers seem to **lie**
in the fiords of northwest Iceland."

It has been reported from Delfzijl that a steamer said
to be ready for blowing up, is lying in the fairway in
order to block the harbor. During the night of 12 Nov.
Dutch engineers are said to have fastened high explosive
bombs in the bracings of the loading bridges and cranes.
A 1,000 **GRT** freighter is said to have been loaded with
sand. According to Dutch statements, these measures
have been taken because the Netherlands **are expecting**
a German invasion.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance 22 Nov.

1. According to a report from the Rumanian Naval Attaché in London, Great Britain has sanctioned the request made by neutral shipping to sail in British convoys under the following conditions:
 - a. The British Admiralty will not be responsible for any ship lost.
 - b. The ships must be trading with or for the British Empire or its allies.
 - c. The participation of neutral ships in the convoy must not be to the exclusion of any British ships.
2. Lively indignation was shown in America over the alleged use of drifting mines by Germany and the violations of the Hague Naval Warfare Agreement. The laying of drifting mines is considered to be a threat not only to Great Britain but also to the whole of international shipping. The British plans for a complete blockade on German exports were welcomed in the United States.

The rough draft of a note of warning from the German Government for neutral shipping frequenting the area around Britain was dispatched to the Foreign Office. The Foreign Office has been requested to inform the foreign governments concerned as quickly as possible in the manner it considers most suitable.

(For the rough draft see War Diary, Part B, Vol. V, page 55).

At 1500 Report of the Commander-in-Chief, Navy to the Fuehrer.

Points discussed:

1. Situation in the Baltic Sea: blocking of the Baltic Sea entrances. Encroachments of Swedish patrol forces.
2. Situation in the North Sea: Offensive mine warfare - results so far observed.
3. Enemy and neutral merchant shipping losses.
4. Declared mined area proposed off the northwest coast of Britain.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

5. Question of further political and military developments. Intensification of naval warfare.
 6. Future plans for the pocket battleships.
 7. Battleship operation.
 8. Economic warfare measures. Announcement of the German-Danish food agreement. British plans for blockading exports.
 9. Submarine construction plans.
 10. Further expansion of the naval air force.
 11. Purchasing submarines abroad.
- (For further details see the notes taken by the Commander-in-Chief, Navy. War Diary, Part C, Vol. VII).

Special Reports on the Enemy 22 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Various reports of convoy movements were submitted: as for example on 21 Nov. a convoy of 20 steamers; and on 22 Nov. a convoy of 30 steamers escorted by two British and two French destroyers said to have passed Gibraltar westward bound. On 22 Nov. the La Plata convoy escorted by the destroyer HAVOCK was 100 miles south of the Canary Islands.

Shipping movements: the cruiser EXETER is proceeding to the Cape of Good Hope (coming from La Plata), on 22 Nov.; the cruiser AJAX left Buenos Aires after a two days' stay and the cruiser CUMBERLAND put in.

Home area: Blocking measures in the Firth of Clyde have been extended south. Ships have been forbidden to anchor between the lines 90° from Toward Point and 286° from Leven Point. Ships intending to sail these waters must first apply for supplementary orders. The old minefield between Dunoon and Cloch Point (northwards) has been cancelled.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

France:

Numerous vessels are at sea on anti-submarine patrols west of the Channel and in the Bay of Biscay because both German submarine sighting and location reports have been received.

Radio monitoring has detected French submarines west of the Bay of Biscay. Submarine PSYCHE off Mogador; another submarine with the captured German steamer TRIFELS put into Casablanca.

Radio Daventry announced the sinking of two German submarines within the last three days by one single French torpedo boat. We have no evidence of these losses whatsoever.

Neutrals:

The Dutch 10,000 ton passenger steamer DAMSTERDYK with planes aboard left San Pedro and will be escorted together with British ships by Canadian warships.

The consul in Tetuan reported: In view of the American neutrality law it is expected that Tangiers will become the focal point of American shipping because Casablanca cannot be touched. This development is bound to have political repercussions of some kind in Spanish and French Morocco.

North Sea:

Yesterday's report of the cruiser BELFAST's accident has been confirmed. It is assumed that the damage was caused by a mine laid by submarine U "21" in the Firth of Forth. The American United Press has made a particularly interesting report on it: it stresses that this is the second time a German submarine has succeeded in penetrating into a British naval base with good result. Because of the mine warning, the British Admiralty has blocked the northern approaches of the Firth of Forth.

On the night of 22 Nov. the British Admiralty announced the loss of the 1,335 ton destroyer GYPSY. Cause: mine explosion. The report states that the blast from the explosion shook the houses along the coast so that we are to conclude that the accident occurred close inshore. It is assumed that the GYPSY struck a mine in the Harwich approaches. The British 315 ton minesweeper DRAGONET struck a mine and sank. The lights in the Thames estuary were altered on 22 Nov.

The report submarine U "18" made on her return confirmed that the British submarine reported to be west of the declared area on 16 Nov. was co-operating with a fishing vessel lying off Channel 2.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The air reconnaissance of the tactical air force in the direction of the Shetlands obtained the following results:

No naval forces in Sullom Voe and the other anchorages in the Shetlands.

One "C"-class anti-aircraft cruiser and presumably one destroyer were sighted in Lax Firth north of Lerwick. At 1310 the attack on the anti-aircraft cruiser was broken off owing to heavy defenses and a low ceiling; then a low level attack against a flying boat was carried out which has sunk.

Baltic Sea:

Fresh submarine warnings west of Fehmarn. Results of depth **charges** are still unknown.

Own Situation 22 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

North Sea:

According to the operational order, on the first day of the battleship operation the ships are to be 70 miles west of Hanstholm at 0100, and approximately 100 miles off the Norwegian coast, off Trondheim, at 1800.

Commanding Admiral, Scouting Force's operation against merchant shipping which was launched at the same time with two cruisers and three destroyers has been hampered by the stormy weather. The searching of prize must be taking place off **Skagen**. The naval forces will return through the Baltic Sea.

LMA mines were again laid by an He "59" squadron during the nights of 22 and 23 Nov. Mines to be laid: Harwich 4, Thames proper 18, Humber 14, Downs 2, Dunkirk 11.

No mines have been found within a three mile circumference of the place where the patrol boat "209" sank. Thereupon Channel "Blue" was **declared open again**.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Group West assumes that this loss is to be attributed to a Dutch drifting mine because of the faulty diaphragm safety devices found on a Dutch mine in the vicinity.

There is no proof of this. From the nature of the detonation (sudden blowing into the air of the whole stern) the Naval Staff also considers it quite possible that it was torpedoed by a British submarine.

Group West reports the laying of a net barrage in Jade Bay.

Baltic Sea:

The supply ship WESTERWALD put into Swinemuende from an Atlantic operation. The ship is to stay there for about **one week** and will then proceed to Danzig shipyard.

Submarine Chase:

No visible results so far.

Warfare Against Merchant Shipping:

Three more steamers have been captured.

The Danish Navy is laying the Belt minefields in Danish territorial waters.

The following regulations are proposed for the minefield pilot service, the minefield and minefield gap patrols, and the shipping control service in the Danish Belt minefields:

- a. German warships and merchantmen will be piloted in both **directions** by the German pilot service.
- b. From north to south German and other neutral ships will be piloted by the German pilot service, and from south to north by the Danish.
- c. The minefield and the minefield gaps in the north will be entirely patrolled by the Danish Navy.
- d. The minefield gaps in the south will be patrolled by the German Navy.
- e. Before the Danish pilots take over, the shipping control service south of the minefield will be undertaken by the German Navy.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

f. Anti-submarine and mine look-out patrols during the passage of German naval forces, and if necessary also of German merchantmen, will be undertaken by the German Navy in both directions.

Owing to the position of the minefield gaps within and outside the territorial waters, the military security of Germany depends on the above regulations.

The Naval Attaché in Copenhagen has received the relevant directive in the hope of coming to an agreement with the Danish Navy.

Negotiations with Sweden about the effective blocking of the areas north of our own Sound minefields, and the question which it also involves, namely of only piloting Swedish warships and merchantmen coming under the jurisdiction of the Swedish Government through the Swedish minefields, have not made any further progress. The proposal which Sweden made on 22 Nov. is most inadequate and only provides for a small minefield **laid by her** in the area from three to four miles off the Swedish coast, and refuses to impose any restrictions on neutral shipping within the three mile limit.

Under such conditions the speedy extension of our own Sound minefield up to the three mile limit will be necessary. The Swedish proposal will have to be turned down whilst giving due notice of the precautions Germany intends to take.

Group East and the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic have been ordered to make preparations for the "Undine" (restricted) minefield so that it can be laid very quickly.

Submarine Situation 22 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

Submarine U "43" reported a convoy 150 miles off La Rochelle, westerly course, speed 7 knots; one tanker hit.

Submarine U "38" reported on the situation off the Norwegian coast. She has up to now been unable to achieve any results.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

In the operational area: Submarine U "13".

Returned on completion of operations: Submarines U "18", U "57". The short report of submarine U "18" announced the sinking of two tankers off Kinnaird Head. Slight merchant traffic off Peterhead. Always close inshore. No patrol vessels out to sea, only close inshore. No traffic was observed in the British mine-field off the Scottish coast.

Submarine U "57" was off the northern exit of the Channel. Two unknown steamers proceeding without lights have been sunk. Traffic was at times brisk near Nordhinder lightship, the main courses observed were: NE, NW and W. The submarine reported an unsuccessful shot against a British ANTELOPE-class destroyer owing to its premature detonation.

Submarine U "22" has started on her return passage from the operational area off Kinnaird Head.

Apart from submarines U "35", U "47", the outward bound Atlantic submarines U "31" and U "48", have been assigned to waiting positions in the area of the Orkneys.

Merchant Shipping 22 Nov.

Own Shipping:

The steamer ADOLF WOERMANN scuttled herself with a precious cargo in the South Atlantic, on the approach of enemy warships. The ship had been shadowed by enemy merchantmen since 20 Nov. which presumably radioed to a British warship.

During the night of 22 Nov. the steamer ANTIOCHIA was stopped by a British cruiser 80 miles southeast of Iceland.

One ship coming from Montevideo arrived in Norway.

On 14 Nov. the German fishing vessel WILHELM REINHOLD sighted a convoy of approximately 20 steamers escorted by naval vessels off Bergen. The fishing vessel **was** stopped by a Norwegian warship, which gave the impression that **it was an attempt** to prevent the fishing vessel from reporting the convoy.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

On the basis of a certain report, it is assumed that the German ore steamer TREUENFELS is **under** special British observation off the Norwegian coast; therefore the following radiogram has been transmitted to all German merchantmen in Norway:

"If possible do not sail outside Norwegian territorial waters. Be very cautious."

Foreign Shipping:

According to Reuter, the British Ministry of Information has announced that in order to control shipping traffic, trade permits for foreign ships will **hereafter** be made out by the Ministry of Economic Warfare. The goods transported by these ships are supposed to be granted special priority. Great Britain demanded bills of lading in a similar way during World War I.

It is reported from Valparaiso that large quantities of copper are being shipped to New York on neutral ships mainly of the United States, where they are transshipped for France and **England**.

For radio monitoring reports on the war losses of enemy and neutral merchant fleets, the register of armed merchantmen, and shipping observations in Arctic Ocean ports see Report 2/39 "Foreign Merchant Shipping".

The following information has been transmitted to the pocket battleship GRAF SPEE:

1. The DEUTSCHLAND put in on 15 Nov. She broke through without encountering the enemy. She has changed her name to LUETZOW. Her return is being kept secret. The WESTERWALD passed through the Great Belt on 22 Nov.

2. The SHROPSHIRE and probably the SUSSEX are in the South Africa area. The EXETER is making for the Cape of Good Hope.

CONFIDENTIAL

23 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance 23 Nov.

1. For the text of the speech **of** the British **King**, non-committal and rather lacking resolution and vigor, see Foreign Press No. 541.

2. The entire foreign press has expressed its attitude to the British Government's announcement of its intensification of the blockade **and aim** to strangle the German export trade, in no uncertain terms. There were sharp protests from the neutrals, especially from the countries chiefly affected, such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, and Japan.

A French report describes the three methods so far adopted for **disrupting** the German economy:

1. Contraband control.
2. Large-scale buying up of goods in the neutral countries in order to paralyze the German economy.
3. Bringing pressure to bear on the neutrals by paying them compensation for not increasing their normal trade with Germany.

German trade which has not yet been fully paralyzed by these measures will be struck to the very roots both by this strangle hold on her export trade and the blocking of the foreign currency she does have.

3. The whole Rumanian cabinet has resigned.

Tatarescu has been entrusted with the formation of a new cabinet. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Gafescu, will remain in the cabinet. (See Political **Review** and Foreign Press).

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. The Chief, Naval Staff pronounced the Swedish answer to the question of closing the Sound to be entirely unsatisfactory because no guarantee is given that the proposed measures will prevent submarines from penetrating into the Baltic Sea (Sweden merely wants to lay an inadequate minefield in the area between the three and four mile limit, and plans to establish a small anti-submarine patrol

CONFIDENTIAL

23 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

within the three mile limit). Furthermore, Sweden did not show herself ready to search shipping for contraband within her territorial waters. The Naval Staff ordered a German minefield to be laid up to the three mile limit. (See also War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII)

2. As regards sanctioning the sinking of tankers within the war zone declared by America (see Warfare Against Merchant Shipping) investigations should be made as to whether the closed area sanctioned to the submarines for sinking ships proceeding without lights should also be reduced to correspond to the boundaries of the American war zone. The Naval Staff feels that all the declared areas for the intensification of the warfare against merchant shipping should in principle be made to correspond to the zones declared in the American neutrality law.

3. As regards co-operating with the Foreign Office, the Chief, Naval Staff agreed with the Chief, Armed Forces High Command that all basic strategic matters of a political nature affecting the Armed Forces as a whole would be discussed and handled by the Armed Forces High Command and the Foreign Office, but that all questions solely affecting naval warfare and constantly requiring immediate discussion and elucidation would be handled directly between the Naval Staff and the Foreign Office. This settlement has been made in response to the urgent needs of naval warfare which can only be in a position to take decisions which nearly always have political repercussions and immediately to adopt the necessary measures by remaining in close permanent contact with our political leadership.

Special Reports on the Enemy 23 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

The battleship REVENGE formerly detected in the western part of the North Atlantic has now been detected in the eastern part of the North Atlantic. The cruiser MANCHESTER is **off** Vigo (until now in the East Indies).

At 0000, the destroyer FORTUNE urgently called for a tug for the FOXHOUND. **The ships** of the 8th Destroyer Flotilla were submarine chasing south of the Hebrides. Ostensibly a collision.

CONFIDENTIAL

23 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

France:

Three groups of a convoy were putting into Brest at half-hourly intervals. Radio Dunkirk announced that shipping has been suspended off the south coast of Cape Gris Nez. (Minefields? Danger of drifting mines?)

North Sea:

The Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet was out at sea south of the Hebrides. Light "C" and "D" class cruisers have again been detected with the Northern Patrol.

There was an enemy air reconnaissance of the area southwest of Norway.

In the forenoon an enemy submarine was sighted and located 15 miles northwest of Borkum.

Own Situation:

The reconnaissance we planned of the Iceland - Faeroes area for the forenoon of 23 Nov. with a Condor plane had to be cancelled because the plane was badly damaged whilst taking off. As expected, no reports were received from the battleships which were to be in grid square AE 9200 at 0800, so that it was assumed that the patrolling of the Iceland - Faeroes area was proceeding according to plan. As no evidence of an enemy encounter or of direct results having been scored by the battleships had been received by the afternoon, the Commanding Admiral, West was at 1630 authorized by Group West to prolong the operation by 24 hours at his own discretion. Shortly after the transmission of this directive, radio monitoring picked up a radiogram from an unknown vessel south of Iceland, at 63° 40' N at 1645 (Central European Time) reporting that the ship was being chased by a battle cruiser.

At 1701 the guard ship in Scapa Flow repeated the radiogram from the unknown vessel (assumed to be an auxiliary cruiser) which had only been transmitted in code, by transmitting it in cypher this time and adding the word "Deutschland" on the end. Shortly afterwards (at 1727 Central European Time) a Command Station, obviously the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet, transmitted the key word "Yellow" in a short radio message which presumably stands for the executive order to **gather and send out the forces** of the Home Fleet. Further urgent orders were issued by the British Admiralty and by the Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet as soon as

CONFIDENTIAL

23 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

the enemy learned of the appearance of heavy German forces in the Iceland - Faeroes area. The entire Home Fleet has been mustered; cruisers and destroyers have been ordered to a state of readiness or else sent out; convoys have been stopped.

It is not impossible that the battleships may have annihilated the enemy and then, according to the situation, either prolonged the operation or started to return after nightfall. There will be no need for the Naval Staff to issue further directives or orders.

The mines laid off the Thames and the Humber have claimed fresh victims. According to radio reports, the 4,570 ton Greek steamer ELENA R., the 974 ton British steamer LEWLAND, and the 350 ton British minesweeper DRAGONET struck mines and sank.

The Cabinet Minister, Sir John Simon, told the House of Commons that the German mines along the east coast of Britain were the fruits of an amazing new invention. Whatever science and intelligence could do would be done to counter this new menace.

According to press reports, the British Admiralty is said to have found a way of neutralizing the magnetic mines. The Admiralty is said to be planning the construction of minesweepers built almost entirely of wood and which would drag metal strips a certain distance behind them which would detonate the magnetic mines.

According to the BBC, the dropping of magnetic mines from planes has been observed. It is said that the mines had been dropped by parachute from sea planes flying at a low level. One mine was said to have been discovered in a fairway and exploded by gun fire(?). Apart from actual sinkings, the ground mines have also had the effect of still further heightening the insecurity of east coast shipping, already sufficiently endangered by our successful submarine activity there.

The British propaganda offensive against German mine warfare has up to now failed to achieve the desired effect and is being strongly **influenced** by neutral concern over the consequences of the intensification of the British blockade. The Dutch Government has urged shipowners to stop sending shipping to Britain until the mine menace off the British coast has been entirely eliminated.

CONFIDENTIAL

23 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Apart from the mines, the numerous wrecks off the Thames and Humber have also proved themselves to be a considerable hindrance to shipping. The enemy's entire freedom of action and also his supply lines have been so extraordinarily restricted along the east coast that the most serious repercussions are to be expected on the British war economy. The enemy's present state of weakness will be exploited with all the means in our power by a further intensification of mine and minefield laying operations with the ultimate objective of making the east coast of Britain absolutely unapproachable.

Baltic Sea:

Nothing to report. Submarine **chase** was without result. No trace of enemy submarines. Minesweeping is to be continued in Danzig Bay.

Merchant Warfare.

In accordance with the Fuehrer Directive the Commander, Submarines received the following order:

"The immediate full use of all weapons against tankers unless recognized to be American, Russian, Japanese, Italian or Spanish, has been sanctioned to submarines in the declared area west of 2° E announced by the United States. As for neutral tankers, the fiction of an internal explosion is desirable. In these cases, therefore, the boats should not show themselves and rather have recourse to electric torpedoes."

The Commander, Submarines immediately transmitted this order to the submarines. The area has been delineated as follows: west of 2° E and within the connecting line 62° N, 2° E; 58° N, 20° W; 45° N, 20° W; 43° 54' N, 2° 45' W; and then 180° up to the Spanish coast.

A further important step towards the intensification of the warfare against merchant shipping has been achieved. With the present immediate sanctioning of the full use of all weapons in the interception of tanker tonnage and oil supplies, all of vital importance to the enemy war machine, the Naval Staff expects to witness the gradual infliction of really serious harm to the enemy.

The present **situation** of German warfare against merchant shipping is as follows:

CONFIDENTIAL

23 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

1. Submarine attacks without previous warning against:

a. all ships recognized to be enemy merchantmen, with the exception of individually routed unarmed passenger steamers;

b. all neutral shipping proceeding in enemy convoys;

c. all ships proceeding without lights within a certain restricted area;

d. all ships which refuse to stop or try to use their radio sets;

e. all tankers west of 20° E within the American war zone except Italian, Russian, Spanish, Japanese, and American ones.

2. Warfare against merchant shipping by stopping and searching ships in accordance with prize regulations:

a. by surface forces against all enemy and neutral shipping;

b. by submarines only against neutral shipping not included in paragraph 1.

3. Surface forces, submarines, and planes will use ground mines in areas restricted by their depth, **counterdefenses**, and our own range.

4. Merchant warfare measures will not be taken against Italian, Spanish, Russian, and Japanese ships.

5. No action is as yet permitted against the following:

I. All individually routed neutral shipping bound for Britain and France.

With the exception of the following:

a. in the event of incorrect behaviour as in paragraph 1. b - d;

b. ships carrying contraband and intercepted in the course of the warfare against merchant shipping;

c. tankers as in paragraph 1. e);

II. All enemy ships camouflaged as neutral ones and adhering to all the regulations.

CONFIDENTIAL

23 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Submarine Situation 23 Nov.

Atlantic:

Submarine U "41" was forced to remain submerged for 20 hours by a destroyer 200 miles west of the Gironde. The boat will have to return owing to lack of fuel.

Submarine U "43" maintained contact with a convoy (240⁰ 9 knots) north of Cape Ortegal until the evening and tried to bring submarine U "26" on to it.

The homeward-bound submarine U "33" received orders from the Commander, Submarines to sail into attack position north of Nordrona. All submarines were ordered on no account to take steamer crews aboard except for prisoners of war who are to be brought home.

According to an agent's report, the hydrophones on French warships have proved rather ineffective. Heavy seas, changes in speed, the proximity of a convoy all make the results very inaccurate.

Latest sinking results:

The 14,935 ton steamer ALAMEDA STAR was shelled off Vigo. Her sinking is still unconfirmed (U "26"?). On 19 Nov. the 1,351 ton British steamer DARINO was sunk off the French coast. On 21 Nov. the trawler SULBY was sunk off the Scottish coast. Two French trawlers have been sunk in the Bay of Biscay.

North Sea:

Submarine U "20" has returned from operations. Submarines U "13" and U "22" are homeward bound from the east coast of Britain so that no submarines are in the North Sea operational area at the moment.

The Atlantic submarines U "47", U "35", U "31", U "48" are still in waiting positions off the Orkneys.

Merchant Shipping 23 Nov.

The steamer TOGO has returned from overseas.

CONFIDENTIAL

23 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The following weather report has been transmitted by radio and cable to German merchant shipping either in neutral ports or homeward bound:

"Low water temperatures in Denmark Strait are not always an indication that there is ice in the vicinity. Use fog zones."

As a result of a discussion between Ministerialrat Coupette and Rear Admiral Schniewind, the Reich Minister of Transportation dispatched the following telegram to the Madrid Embassy on 22 Nov.:

"For the time being don't send any ships back home without my permission."

The Icelandic fishing vessel HEKLA, which put into Hamburg, reported that she was stopped by a British auxiliary cruiser and although bound for Hamburg was released again.

The Dutch Government has advised shipping companies to suspend shipping to Britain for the time being. Plans are said to be on hand for assembling Dutch ships in convoys and escorting them with ocean going tugs equipped with minesweeping gear once the minefield situation off the British coast has been clarified.

The Foreign Office has announced that there will now be official consulates established in the following places in Norway:

Kristiansand,
Stavanger,
Haugesund,
Bergen,
Trondheim,
Narvik,
Kirkenes.

The following information has been transmitted to the pocket battleship GRAF SPEE:

1. On 18 Nov. EAGLE, CORNWALL, DORSETSHIRE, two Australian destroyers, the submarine parent ship LUCIA, and MEDWAY put into Colombo. Submarines are possibly being transferred from East Asia to Colombo. On 22 Nov. the cruiser AJAX put out from Buenos Aires and the cruiser CUMBERLAND put in.

2. According to Reuter, light and radio messages off the South African coast have been unreliable for some time.

CONFIDENTIAL

24 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The Foreign Office submitted the economic warfare measures which it (Economic Warfare Branch Ambassador Dr. Ritter) proposes to take against the Baltic States and which have already been discussed several times.

I. By bringing increased economic pressure to bear on them, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland are to be forced to abandon their export trade outside the Baltic Sea and to alter their whole economy by trading exclusively with Germany. The same methods are in a certain degree also to be applied to Sweden.

II. The Foreign Office considers the following guiding principles as essential to any concerted action by German naval forces against the trade of these countries:

1. The exports of these four countries: Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland are to be particularly severely treated during the next weeks. Every export of raw materials and food from these countries must generally speaking be suspected of being bound for Britain if the exports

- a. leave the Baltic by sea or
- b. are shipped to Sweden.

We cannot in practice allow this general suspicion to be cleared by the usual proofs. Exceptionally conclusive and irrefutable proofs will have to be available for a confiscated ship to be released again.

2. Ships loaded with wood of all kinds (including wood pulp and therefore cellulose) coming from Scandinavia and from the Baltic Sea area, even when consigned to neutral countries, must generally speaking be suspected of being bound for Britain. Such ships must be stopped and not released unless, once again, some individual case arises where exceptionally conclusive and irrefutable proofs are submitted completely clearing it of the general suspicion.

3. Consignments of other important raw materials and food (besides wood) which have to or may touch British waters on their passage (for instance from Scandinavia to the Netherlands or Belgium, or to the United States, or to Africa or South America etc.) must generally speaking be suspected of being ultimately bound for Britain where they will remain.

The Foreign Office asked the Naval Staff if they had any misgivings about taking part in such proceedings and if not, would they issue the adequate directives to the naval forces.

CONFIDENTIAL

24 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The Naval Staff in principle welcomes the Foreign Office's vigorous ruthless attitude. The matter will be examined by the Naval Staff.

Special Reports on the Enemy 24 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

On 22 Nov. a SIDNEY-class light cruiser (PERTH) passed through the Panama Canal westward bound so that three cruisers (DESPATCH, CARADOC, PERTH) are now off the west coast of America presumably to cover the important transports of war materials announced to be coming from west coast American ports.

Bristol, Liverpool, Le Havre, and Marseilles are to become the ports of unloading for the supplies of material coming from the United States and Canada.

France:

Radio Monitoring Service detected a number of ships and positions, including four British destroyers, south of the Canary Islands, and the 12th French Flotilla Leader Division in Casablanca.

A Spanish report announced that a large troop transport will leave Casablanca on 28 Nov.

A French armed patrol steamer reported the sinking of a German submarine in the Channel. (We have no submarines in the Channel at the moment).

North Sea:

An unknown Commanding Admiral, presumably Commander in Chief, Home Fleet, was detected north of the Hebrides at 1430 on 24 Nov. He was transmitting an urgent radiogram to the heavy cruisers NORFOLK and SUFFOLK and to the light cruiser DELHI.

The British Admiralty admitted that the most modern cruiser BELFAST (allegedly north of the Isle of May) had been damaged either by a

CONFIDENTIAL

24 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

torpedo or mines. The ship is said to have reached port under her own steam and to have suffered but 20 wounded. (So that the presence of mines in the Firth of Forth shall not be suspected, the German press has announced that the cruiser BELFAST was torpedoed by a German submarine). The British Admiralty has not attempted to solve the problem of whether it was a submarine or mines, but has announced further restriction for shipping in the Firth of Forth.

During the night of 24 Nov. enemy bombers were over Heligoland Bight, some of them flying low over Brunsbuettel. No bombs, only pamphlets. No results from our **gunfire**.

Fresh statements confirm that the area 10 - 20 miles north of Borkum is being constantly occupied by enemy submarines.

Anti-submarine measures will have to be intensified. The laying of further anti-submarine minefields is under consideration by Group West.

Own Situation 24 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

North Sea:

No reports have been received from the battleships, because in accordance with the operational order, actions are only to be reported within the range of penetration of our own air force.

Therefore no reports have yet been received of the action which undoubtedly took place yesterday in the area south of Iceland. It is to be hoped that at least one of the British cruisers (DELHI for instance) patrolling this area was intercepted by the battleships. The enemy tactics cannot yet be clearly discerned. The enemy is possibly in a state of indecision owing to his ignorance of our situation. He seems to think that the DEUTSCHLAND will return and that our battleships are therefore quite likely to make an advance sweep into the Atlantic ocean.

CONFIDENTIAL

24 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Because the entire British Home Fleet has been brought into action, the Commanding Admiral, Group West decided in agreement with the Chief, Naval Staff to send out the forces of the Commanding Admiral, Scouting Force on the morning of 25 Nov. (as things stand at present) to take the battleships under escort, but not further north than the latitude of Hanstholm as they would find themselves at the mercy of a superior enemy should the battleships fail to arrive. Any change of plans will be reported to the Commanding Admiral to whom will be left the choice of returning either through the Skagerrak or through Channel II in order to give him more freedom of action.

Baltic Sea:

The Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic reported that the Belt pilot service planned by the Naval Staff had begun. The Naval Attaché in Copenhagen made the following report on the pilot service question:

1. The Danes most insistently request that a German pilot service should not be insisted on from north to south. They feel that their legitimate territorial rights will be very severely restricted if pilot vessels, entitled to stop neutral shipping within Danish territorial waters to take on pilots, are stationed there. The establishment of a German pilot service will make it difficult for them to maintain their neutrality which has already been compromised by the laying of the minefields.
2. In other words, the Danes feel that the provision of Danish pilots is quite adequate for passing through the Danish minefields. The mine channels are so well marked that the introduction of compulsory pilotage is not planned. **This is also advisable because of the local Danish fishing industry.** In so far as we might consider it necessary, German merchantmen could naturally at times take German pilots aboard for both directions. The main thing is that the principle of Danish neutrality and territorial rights should be at least outwardly maintained when dealing with neutral shipping.
3. Compulsory pilotage is not to be enforced for warships or for Danish Government vessels belonging to the actual minefield patrol.
4. General impression: The Danish Commander-in-Chief hopes that after having consented to our recent demands, the German Grand Admiral will be ready to acknowledge the urgent requests which have been submitted for the maintenance of Danish sovereignty. The Danes will deal with German merchantmen and prizes with the utmost

CONFIDENTIAL

24 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

consideration, but they do not wish any concessions they may make to be noticed, thus compromising their territorial rights and neutral policy.

The suggested regulations will be examined with Group East. As the negotiations with Sweden for an adequate blocking of the Sound have been without result, Group East and the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic received the following order:

"Undine unrestricted. Ensure immediate minefield patrols and warn the ships which have not yet heard of the extension of the declared area. A warning to shipping was sent out by High Command, Navy at noon on 24 Nov."

A warning to shipping was transmitted by coastal radio stations in the afternoon.

In the course of the warfare against merchant shipping in the Baltic Sea four steamers were brought in to be searched.

Submarine Situation:

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

The homeward bound submarine U "33" reported the sinking of a 7,000 ton British auxiliary cruiser in a **gunfire** engagement west of the Orkneys. It was a "Q" ship, carrying Dutch camouflage.

As was afterwards revealed in foreign broadcasts, the ship involved was the German steamer BORKUM which had been captured by the British and which was making for a Scottish port with a British prize crew on board.

North Sea:

Nothing to report.

According to Reuter, five survivors of the Dutch steamer FLIEDERECHT have been landed on the northwest coast of Britain after having spent seven and a half days at sea in an open boat. The steamer is said to have been sunk by a German submarine although it was coming

CONFIDENTIAL

24 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

from a neutral port.

Merchant Shipping 24 Nov.

The Foreign Office transmitted the following report:

On 22 Nov. the Embassy in Rio de Janeiro dispatched the following cable:

"Many German importers, especially, from Hamburg and Bremen, habitually send ordinary cables to Brazilian importers about export goods connected with German ships leaving here November - December. There have also been telephone calls on similar subjects. Urgently request that steps be immediately taken to stop this highly dangerous practice which representatives of Brazilian cable company itself described as suicidal. Naval Attaché Command here requests that High Command, Navy be also informed."

The following Radiogram 1533 was transmitted to the pocket battleship GRAF SPEE:

- "1. REVENGE in the eastern part of the North Atlantic. MANCHESTER west of the Channel.
2. Report fuel supply of SPEE and ALTMARK in next radiogram."

Group West will be informed of Fuehrer Directive No. 8.

To avoid an undesirable immobilization of forces as a result of further postponements, Group West was ordered only to hold the forces intended for operations "Wilhelm", "Otto", and "Toni" in immediate readiness, whereas operations "Oese", "Ida", and "Hans" can be carried out within the limits of the then available forces, or else after the execution of the first mentioned operations.

(For further details see directive, Part C, Vol. II).

As regards the supplying of auxiliary cruisers, orders have been given that after the completion of auxiliary cruisers 1 - 7 six

CONFIDENTIAL

24 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

more ships should be prepared as auxiliary cruisers 8 - 13 and their equipment made ready. These ships are motor vessels. A range of at least 40,000 miles at 12 knots should be demanded. Twelve months' supplies should be provided for.

Equipment:

2 ships	400 mines
4 ships	60 - 100 mines

All ships equipped with bow protection gear.

Guns:	4 ships	6	15 cm
	2 ships	5	15 cm
	1	3.7	cm
	1	7.5	cm

Torpedoes: Two twin tubes on all ships.

Planes: Two each - He 114's.

CONFIDENTIAL

25 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance.

1. a. On 24 Nov. the German Ambassador presented a strong note of protest to the Swedish Government about the behavior of Swedish naval forces which, contrary to the laws of neutrality, have even been **interfering** with the German warfare against merchant shipping in the open sea. He announced that in the event of further interference, German naval forces had been ordered to make ruthless use of their weapons. The Swedes on their part however have pointed to German violations of neutrality within the three mile limit. Investigations are in progress.

(For further details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII).

b. Sweden has replied to the note we addressed to its Government some time ago about the penetration of enemy submarines within Swedish waters contrary to the neutrality laws: The Swedish Government was not aware of any single case where either Polish or British submarines had remained within territorial waters or had had actual engagements there which would have been a violation of Swedish neutrality. We have furthermore been assured that the Swedish Government feels itself quite capable of shouldering the entire responsibility for the defense and maintenance of its neutrality.

2. The neutrals' highly unfavorable attitude to the export blockade threatened by Britain still persists. In Belgium great concern is felt for the fate of the port of Antwerp which is vitally dependent on German exports. The Danish and Swedish Governments have joined in the diplomatic steps taken by the other countries by stressing the serious consequences this export blockade will have on the maritime trade of the neutral countries.

(For further details see "Foreign Press No. 544").

3. According to a report from Bucharest, Britain is said to have offered to purchase 60 per cent of Rumania's entire exports.

The Swedish Naval Attaché was ordered to report to the Chief, Naval Staff who, as in the note of protest we handed to the Swedish Government, stated the impossibility of allowing Swedish naval forces to continue contravening the neutrality laws and informed him that German naval forces would find themselves compelled to put a stop to any further interference by force of arms.

CONFIDENTIAL

25 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. The Chief, Naval Staff sees danger in the possibility that in the event of German action against the Netherlands, Britain might make a surprise landing on the Norwegian coast and take possession of a base there. He therefore requests that further thought be given to the matter.

2. On the conclusion of the battleship operation, the pocket battleship LUETZOW is first to return to Gdynia and then go to Danzig on 1 Dec. for an overhaul. The ship will not be ready to put out again until the middle or end of January at the earliest. The supply ship WESTERWALD will take 8 - 10 weeks to repair and overhaul. The dockyard period is planned to take place in Danzig.

3. In view of the good minelaying results off the east coast of Britain, the Chief, Naval Staff has again referred to the urgent necessity **of intensifying this type of warfare still** further. All available submarines are to be used for minelaying operations even at the cost of having to abandon the submarine offensive against Atlantic convoys, which is far less important for the time being. The completion of the minelaying operations off Liverpool, Cardiff, Newcastle, and Plymouth is urgent.

The following directive has been transmitted to Group West and to Commander, Submarines:

"To ensure the success of our mine warfare we must continue to concentrate our submarines on minelaying operations."

Special Reports on the Enemy 25 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Distribution of Forces:

The battle cruiser HOOD is to arrive in the western part of the Channel (presumably Portsmouth) on the afternoon of 26 Nov. and

CONFIDENTIAL

25 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

is to put out for Gibraltar on the afternoon of 27 Nov.

At 2000 on 24 Nov. the battle cruiser REPULSE and the aircraft carrier FURIOUS put out from Halifax, course 90°. The cruiser MANCHESTER is coming into Portsmouth from the Mediterranean for repairs.

Convoy Organization: The Intelligence Center in Spain reported on the convoy movements in Gibraltar: On 24 Nov. a convoy consisting of 25 merchantmen, including 20 armed ones, put into Gibraltar coming from the west, escorted by destroyers and patrol boats.

According to a report from a steamer, the Mediterranean convoys no longer assemble in Malta but in Gibraltar. From Gibraltar to Le Havre the convoys are said to be escorted by French warships and from there on by British ones.

France:

One battleship (of the DUNKERQUE class?) and two flotilla leader divisions were ordered to Brest for rapid supplying.

This measure is presumably connected with the appearance of German battleships in the Iceland-Faeroes area.

The 4th Cruiser Division put into Brest at 1400 on 25 Nov.

Neutrals:

Eire is organizing PT boat and trawler patrols for coastal defense.

North Sea:

The British Admiralty has issued a proclamation to all the fishermen of Britain requesting them to place themselves and their fishing vessels at the disposal of the Navy for fighting the mine menace.

Because of the danger of mines in the Firth of Forth, obviously now realized, in approaching the Firth of Forth, merchant shipping has been directed to keep to the south of the Isle of May. The Admiralty has warned the gunboat GRIMSBY, in contact with a convoy, against mines dropped from planes.

For enemy movements connected with the battleship operation see the survey of our own situation.

25 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Own Situation 25 Nov.

Nothing to report from the Atlantic.

North Sea:

There are no reports from the battleships. The reconnaissance planes which took off in the forenoon detected several enemy groups in the channel between the Shetlands and Norway whose radio traffic had been previously located. The first sighting report was on a cruiser and four destroyers approximately 70 miles west of the Norwegian coast, south of Bergen, at 1400. At 1200 a plane detected another cruiser and five destroyers 100 miles east of the Shetlands and three more destroyers in their vicinity. A third plane reported two battleships (NELSON, RODNEY!) with an anti-submarine escort and one cruiser without giving their position; but from the plane's position the vicinity of the Shetlands is to be assumed.

At 1330 the picture of the enemy situation was completed by a further sighting report of two light cruisers on a westerly course 80 miles east of the northern tip of the Shetlands. These observations showed that the enemy had moved his light forces into the Shetlands - Norway area, but that he was still en route with his heavy forces, apparently without battle cruisers, however, which alone could become a serious menace to our battleships.

The Naval Staff, therefore, considered this a favorable moment for a battleship operation and that further good results were to be expected should the battleships encounter the enemy cruisers.

The battleships were not detected by our own air reconnaissance as might have been expected, so that they were presumably much further north. Group West requested the Commanding Admiral to transmit at a given hour a very short radio signal impossible to detect, lest he should at that time be already sailing further south than 58° N. The reply signal did not come in, so that in view of the powers granted to the Commanding Admiral, the battleships' return must be anticipated approximately 24 hours later.

Group West kept the Commanding Admiral continually informed of the results of enemy air reconnaissance.

As a result of the shadowing report of a sea reconnaissance plane, bombers of the 26th Bomber Squadron were able to attack a group of enemy cruisers and destroyers between 1300 and 1400. Several bombs

CONFIDENTIAL

25 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

hit their target (four 50-kilo bombs on one vessel; one 250 kilo bomb on another vessel). In connection with this it is amazing that in the evening the cruiser GLASGOW radioed that she planned to enter Scapa. We sustained no losses. The forces of the Commanding Admiral, Scouting Force waiting to take the battleships under escort west of Bovbjerg, were ordered by Group West to refuel as quickly as possible in order to be operationally ready again on 26 Nov.

In the evening radio monitoring confirmed that the battle cruiser HOOD was not in the North Sea but in the Atlantic making for the Channel. (See "Enemy Situation").

From 1600 - 1700 several enemy reconnaissance planes penetrated into Heligoland Bight, flying over Heligoland, Wilhelmshaven, and Cuxhaven. Anti-aircraft fire was without result.

Baltic Sea:

The patrol boat "301" struck a mine (presumably German or Danish drifting mine) in the southern outlet of the Great Belt and sank (16 missing).

At 0920 Group East reported by telephone that a Danish torpedo boat in the vicinity of the Great Belt minefield requested a German pilot vessel to leave her position north of the minefield because the Danes were working out new regulations. The Group pointed out that the possibility of a withdrawal in accordance with Danish wishes would seriously endanger the weakest points in this minefield, that is to say the northern outlets, as it would mean that the patrolling of these mine channels would be entirely transferred to the neutrals. The Group urgently requested that German patrol forces be stationed north of the Danish minefields.

The Chief, Operations Branch, Naval Staff asked the Group to withdraw the German pilot vessel for the time being, that is until the pilot service question has been settled.

The Naval Staff had the following attitude **on** the pilot service question (see the Danish proposals of 24 Nov.):

In deference to Danish feelings about their neutrality, our

CONFIDENTIAL

25 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

attempts to simplify the control of incoming shipping by taking German pilots aboard, will, though desirable from a military point of view, be abandoned. The necessary contraband searches of shipping coming from the north will, therefore, just like the searches of outward-bound shipping, have to take place south of the minefields, outside territorial waters. But a German pilot vessel must continue being stationed north of the minefields, though outside the territorial waters, in order to be able to transfer pilots to German ships.

The following telegram has been dispatched to the Naval Attaché in Copenhagen:

"Agree to Danish proposal. German pilot service for German ships only in both directions. German pilot station in the north for ships coming from the north outside Danish territorial waters.

Patrol of inward and outward bound shipping, south of minefields, outside territorial waters.

Naval Staff."

Group East and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic have received the following conclusive order on the pilot service question:

1. As regards Danish neutrality in the Belt minefields, German pilot service in both directions will only be for German ships.
2. The mine channel will be so accurately marked by the Danes that general compulsory pilotage will not be enforced and there will be no compulsory pilotage for warships.
3. The observation of inward and outward bound shipping south of the minefields will be executed by the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic outside the territorial waters.
4. In view of Denmark's loyalty and her firm resolve not to let British submarines through, there will only be German patrols south of the minefield.

Furthermore, after the Danes have completed the blocking of the Belts and the western outlet of the Smaalund fairway, Group East will be allowed to carry out its own proposal of

CONFIDENTIAL

25 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

sweeping and sanctioning former German declared areas in the southern outlet of the Belts.

The sweeping of further submarine minefields will be decided on later.

The Naval Attaché in Copenhagen will be informed accordingly. In the course of 25 Nov. a minelaying operation for the prolongation of the Sound minefield up to the Swedish three mile limit will be carried out and a minefield patrol will be established. A Swedish note of protest is anticipated.

Submarine Situation.

Atlantic:

In the operational area: submarines U "28", U "29",
U "43".

Homeward bound: submarines U "26", U "41", U "49",
U "53", U "33".

Bound for Kola Bay: submarine U "38".

Outward bound: submarines U "47", U "35", U "31",
U "48".

In view of the favorable attack positions which the enemy movements may yield as a result of the battleship operation, submarine U "35" has been ordered northwest of the Fair Isle channel and submarine U "47" west of Pentland Firth. Submarine U "31" is lying east of the Orkneys and submarine U "48" east of the Fair Isle channel. Submarine U "33" has returned home.

Submarine Successes:

The 5,144 ton British steamer ROYSTON GRANGE has been torpedoed in the operational area by submarine U "41".

The Swedish 6,336 ton tanker GUSTAV E. REUTER reported

CONFIDENTIAL

25 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

that she struck a mine 14 miles west-northwest of Fair Isle. (Result of sanctioning the sinking of tankers without warning).

The Commander, Submarines informed submarine U "38" of the Russian declared area off Kola Bay and also of the good prospects of finding shipping off Teriberka Bay. She is to remain in hiding within the territorial waters and the declared area and should not fire any torpedoes there.

Merchant Shipping 25 Nov.

According to a special report from Buenos Aires, the Argentine Government has decided to put a complete stop to exports to Britain and France. The Naval Interrogation Service in Luebeck made the following report:

Captain Tunholm of the 3,759 ton Swedish steamer VALPARAISO, less than 12 knots, coming from Stockholm and bound for Chile via the Panama Canal, received the following instructions from his company: until the parallel of Tromsø remain within the **islands**, then cross the Atlantic north of 61° as far as the American coast, then proceed south keeping close inshore to the Panama Canal. Follow the same course for the return journey.

Various information would indicate that Italian merchant shipping is being more intensively patrolled in the Gibraltar area.

In view of the high number of shipping losses in British waters, American insurance companies have increased their premiums on ship cargoes bound for Britain, France, Eire, Belgium, and the Netherlands, freights on neutral ships included.

For British regulations for certificates of origin on goods to be exported to Britain see appendix 2 to: "Foreign Press No. 544".

It is reported from Athens that Great Britain has entered into negotiations with Greece for chartering half of the total Greek tonnage.

The following directive was dispatched to Group West and the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North:

CONFIDENTIAL

25 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The Army High Command lays great value on the speedy cutting of the Netherlands - **England** cable. (The matter had been preliminarily discussed with Armed Forces High Command and has today, 25 Nov., been agreed to by the Fuehrer as being particularly desirable.).

CONFIDENTIAL

26 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance 26 Nov.

1. Russo-Finnish frontier incident on the Carelian Isthmus. Strong Russian note of protest to Finland (see "Foreign Press No. 545/546").
2. Broadcast by Mr. Chamberlain. Reference to recent shipping losses. "British public opinion has been gravely shocked by the shattering daily shipping losses whose magnitude has far exceeded our worst apprehensions". - "The British will deal with the magnetic mines in the same way as they dealt with the submarines before them."

British war aims: Changing the German state of mind.

British peace aims: Creating a new Europe.

3. Various reports say that relations between Japan and America have grown more strained. The placing of a trade embargo against Japan is under consideration in America. Japan will not yield to America in China. But even though relations are getting worse, an actual break is not anticipated for the moment.

Special Reports on the Enemy 26 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Distribution of Forces: The battleship WARSPITE is expected back in home waters within the next few days. The aircraft carrier ARK ROYAL which was in Freetown until 10 Nov. is now said to be in home waters.

Convoy Traffic: The Halifax convoy which is to be assembled in Halifax today is said preponderantly to be carrying bombers, fighters, a considerable number of lightly armored trucks, miscellaneous war material, fuel, cotton, wheat and corn.

France:

At 1400 radio monitoring located the position of a fairly large formation of ships coming from the south, course 65°, speed

CONFIDENTIAL

26 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

20 knots, northwest of Cape Finisterre. The battleship STRASBOURG last observed in Oran is probably with this formation. The flotilla leaders which had earlier been detected in the southern part of the Bay of Biscay have probably joined this unit. On the evening of 25 Nov. one of these flotilla leaders attacked a submarine (U "43"?) west of Cape Finisterre.

The transfer of the battleship group STRASBOURG from the Gibraltar area north to the Brest area may be considered the direct result of the appearance of German battleships in the Iceland - Faeroes area. The future plans of the French Admiralty cannot yet be discerned. The speedy refueling of the battleship DUNKERQUE observed yesterday would suggest that this ship will be putting out immediately she has finished refueling, presumably because the enemy still thinks that the German battleships, which according to the Naval Staff must have been fairly easily spotted as the SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU, have broken through into the Atlantic.

North Sea:

No fresh reports have been received on the enemy situation. The present very bad weather conditions (southerly gale) have suspended our own and presumably also enemy air reconnaissance. The enemy may possibly withdraw his light forces from the Shetlands - Norway area.

The British Admiralty has reported the sinking of the 16,700 ton P&O liner RAWALPINDI which had been converted into an auxiliary cruiser. There were only seventeen survivors.

This, therefore, confirms the previously prevailing assumption that an enemy auxiliary cruiser fell victim to the battleship operations south of Iceland. **Radio traffic does not indicate** any further enemy losses in the Iceland - Faeroes **strait**.

British coastal radio stations have announced that two more light-ships have been positioned in the Folkstone area, presumably to mark the newly established waiting position for neutral shipping. Owing to the mine incidents off the Downs, the Admiralty has transferred the shipping control area to Folkstone.

One coastal radio station announced that an unknown ship was drifting as an obstruction to navigation in the area southeast of the Shetlands.

CONFIDENTIAL

26 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Furthermore the torpedoing and sinking of the former 14,300 ton Polish ship PILSUDSKI now sailing under British colors, is reported off the northwest coast of Britain. This is a particularly gratifying result!

Two more steamers of 1,500 and 2,500 ton respectively, struck mines and sank.

Own Situation 26 Nov.

North Sea:

No reports from the battleships. The particularly bad weather conditions forced us to suspend air reconnaissance and it was thought advisable to keep back the scouting forces lying ready **to meet the battleships.**

Commanding Admiral, West's latest plans are not known. According to the calculations of the Naval Staff, if the battleships are able to start on their return passage according to plan, they should be south of 58° N at noon on 26 Nov. There may be delays due to weather conditions. The request Group West transmitted to the Commanding Admiral, to report his position north or south of 58° N by a short radio signal impossible to detect, has not been answered. A second request was at last answered at 1710 reporting that latitude 58° had been passed.

At 2000 the battleships were 140 miles west of Hanstholm and were returning via channel "Blue" into Heligoland Bight.

Baltic Sea:

The Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic reports that numerous, ostensibly Danish mines are drifting in the Great Belt and proving very difficult to shoot at in the heavy seas. It is suspected that these mines are still active and that the loss of the patrol boat "301" is to be ascribed to one of the mines. The pilot stations of the forces of the Commanding Admiral, Defenses Baltic north and south of the Danish declared area and the patrols north of our own Belt minefield had to be withdrawn owing to the danger of these drifting mines. Shipping will be immediately warned of the mine menace off Kjels Nor.

CONFIDENTIAL

26 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The Naval Staff is not yet fully convinced that these were Danish mines but thinks it quite likely that our own mines have been drifting in this stormy weather. Above all there is no reason for doubting the efficiency of the Danish minefields. Nevertheless, the Naval Attaché in Copenhagen has been informed of the apprehensions felt about Danish drifting mines and asked to request the thorough checking and controlling of Danish mines.

The Swedish Naval Staff has announced the extension of the German minefield off Falsterbo. As a result, the passage will be impossible for ships of 8 meter draught. German mines are therefore lying within the 4 mile limit which according to the Swedes represents the limits of Swedish territorial waters. The Swedish Government will be lodging protests against these German measures.

A Danish press report reads as follows:

"The Swedish Government has requested the pilot service to investigate whether a new fairway could not be created round Falsterbo within the three mile limit. The reason is the proposed extension of the minefield beyond the 4 mile limit planned by Germany. The new channel would if necessary run via Falsterbo shoals and would entail considerable blasting and dredging operations. But it could probably be effected in a comparatively short time."

Submarine Situation 26 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report. Submarines U "26", U "41", U "49", U "53" are homeward bound.

North Sea:

Commander, Submarines has assigned the submarines lying near the Orkneys (U "47", U "35", U "31", U "48") to the area east of the islands with orders to operate against ships sweeping to leeward.

Submarine U "33" (Lieutenant (s.g.) von Dresky) put into Wilhelmshaven from a long-range operation in the Atlantic. After minelaying in the Bristol Channel, the boat was in the operational area off the northern part of the Channel and

CONFIDENTIAL

26 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

did not find any traffic there. Before returning she sank five fishing vessels. For the U "33"'s short report see War Diary, Part B, Vol. V, page 57).

Submarine and Mine Successes:

According to official London reports, 17 ships including eleven British ones totalling 25,787 tons, two French ships totalling over 3,000 tons, and four neutral ships totalling 23,950 tons were sunk during the weekend of 26 Nov.

The 8,857 ton Dutch steamer SPAARNDAM struck a mine in the Thames estuary.

Merchant Shipping 26 Nov.

Own Shipping:

At 0800 on 26 Nov. Radio Daventry reported that three more German steamers had been captured by British naval forces off the South American coast. During the last few days there were according to our records the steamer WINDHUK, the motor vessel DRESDEN, and the steamer SAO PAULO in the above mentioned area.

Foreign Trade and Shipping:

A Hamburg firm is said to have learned in Stockholm that the Norwegians "gave away" 85 tankers to the British.

This information, which must be further investigated, would mean that Norway has sold or chartered one third of her total tanker tonnage to Britain. This is unbelievable at the moment because Britain's own tanker tonnage can carry approximately 24 million tons of oil whereas her war requirements are only estimated at approximately 16 million tons. (Last peacetime requirements: 12 million tons).

The consul in Narvik has reported Finnish transit shipments of cellulose aboard Norwegian and Greek ships to Britain. The shipment of even wet cellulose points to the urgency of British requirements. This transit traffic of Finnish cellulose to Britain seem to be very brisk, for on 24 Nov. the consul counted 80 loaded box cars, let alone further supplies stored away in warehouses.

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. Reports from the Naval Attaché in Moscow and from other sources confirm the suspicion that it is now too late to deal a blow against wood shipments from northern Russian ports. The wood has been shipped from Russia. On the other hand large piles of wood have been observed in Norwegian ports.

Attacks on the Norway - Great Britain sea routes therefore seem more necessary than ever. Submarine U "38" operating off Kola Bay should, therefore, be transferred (see "Warfare Against Merchant Shipping"). The difficulty of intercepting merchant traffic from Norway is due to the fact that merchant shipping is able to use Norwegian territorial waters and then to leave the territorial limits unobserved for Britain.

2. The Chief, Naval Staff has ordered the most ruthless warfare against merchant shipping in the Baltic Sea (Kattegat, Sound etc.) No yielding to Sweden.

3. The Chief, Naval Staff has ordered that every effort should be made for the full war readiness of the heavy cruisers HIPPER and BLUECHER to be established by 1 Apr. 1940. Above all, the cruisers must be fully operational by the time the battleships begin their major routine dockyard repairs.

Oral report of the Chief, Quartermaster Division, Naval Staff to the Chief, Naval Staff on experiences gained from the mobilization of auxiliary formations.

1. General observations: Certain major failures and inadequacies in preparation and armament have very greatly handicapped the establishment of auxiliary formations. It should be remembered, however, that within two or three months approximately 1,000 auxiliary vessels **have** been commissioned, a figure which was **barely** reached in World War I **inspite of the most careful preparations.** The necessary preliminaries to mobilization were not nearly finished at the time of the unexpectedly early outbreak of this war. As already fully acknowledged by Commander-in-Chief,

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Navy, the utmost has obviously been done to meet demands. The organization would, however, appear to be in need of improvement and of thorough investigation.

2. In view of the serious detailed statements made by the Chief, Naval (Ship) Construction Division on the outlook for the submarine construction program, the Commander-in-Chief, Navy came to the following decisions:

a. Of the "K" supply ships only the first two, already half finished, are to be completed. The construction of the other four ships, already planned, is to be abandoned in favor of urgent construction and personnel demands.

b. The first wave of auxiliary cruisers is to be so accelerated that they go into action this very winter. Their duties will be decided on by the Commander-in-Chief, Navy after their commissioning and first trial runs.

c. The material for the second wave of auxiliary cruisers is to be prepared during the summer of 1940. But nothing is to be allowed to interfere with other urgent constructions. Their commissioning and operational duties will depend on the availability of complements - a problem which **is expected to present** the Officer Personnel Department and the Bureau of Naval Administration with many great difficulties.

Special Reports on the Enemy 27 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

The following information on the distribution of naval forces within the last few days was transmitted to the pocket battleship GRAF SPEE:

18 Nov. Mombassa three submarines.

20 Nov. Dakar Area: PROVENCE, BRETAGNE, DUPLEIX, PRIMAUGUET, DUQUAY - TROUIN, 4 torpedo cruisers, 3 destroyers, 5 submarines.

Casablanca Area: LORRAINE, MARSEILLAISE, LA GALISSONNIERE, MONTCALM, 6 destroyers, 8 submarines.

Gibraltar - Oran Area: PARIS, 6 destroyers, 6 submarines.

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

22 Nov. Cruiser PERTH from Colon to Balboa.
Cruiser HOBART put into Bombay.

25 Nov. MANCHESTER in Portsmouth dockyard.
NORFOLK, SUFFOLK in contact with Home Fleet.
Aircraft carrier ARK ROYAL **surmised** in home waters.
KENT probably in the East Indies!
Only BIRMINGHAM, older destroyers, and submarines in
East Asia.

26 Nov. Cruiser ALGERIE in Toulon.
STRASBOURG, DUNKERQUE with 3 light cruisers and 6 torpedo
cruisers presumably in Brest area.

France:

Apart from reports of convoy movements there is nothing
to report.

North Sea:

A number of reports again refer to the brisk shipping
traffic (either proceeding to assembly point, or a convoy) from
Bergen to the west.

The Commander-in-Chief, Home Fleet seems to have proceeded from
the waters of Northern Scotland through the Irish Sea to the
south during **the night of 27 Nov.**

According to a report from Copenhagen (owing to an investigation
of the sinking of the KANADA), it was learned that at the time of
her sinking, that is to say on 3 Nov., there were no less than
26 wrecks of ships struck by mines off the Humber.

Latest British reports announce the sinking of the British 10,500
ton tanker JAMES MAGUIRE and of two other British steamers which
struck mines off the east coast of Britain.

Radio Daventry has denied the report that the port of London has
been closed.

Even if the port has not been officially closed, practically
speaking it is, because reaching it entails the greatest risks
as not only mines, but also numerous wrecks are making it very
difficult to approach.

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Own Situation 27 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

North Sea:

The Commanding Admiral, West put into Wilhelmshaven towards noon according to plan with the SCHARNHORST and the GNEISENAU still fully operational and with only minor sea damage. According to a short report from the Commanding Admiral, West, on 23 Nov. the auxiliary cruiser RAWALPINDI was sunk in the Faeroes - Iceland **strait** after a short engagement. One officer and 25 men were taken prisoner. The Commanding Admiral then awaited the further developments of the situation outside the range of enemy air reconnaissance in the northeastern waters, in the Shetland narrows, and despite very heavy seas returned at high speed to the North Sea on 26 Nov. As to the hull construction and the engines, the battleships stood up to their test very well. For results of the prisoner of war interrogations and the British Admiralty's statement on the sinking of the auxiliary cruiser RAWALPINDI see War Diary Part B, Vol. V., Page 558 and 559.

The first major operation of the battleships was thus completed. It proved a complete success and the expected results were fully achieved. Essentially they were as follows:

1. The appearance of the battleships in the Faeroes - Iceland area has shown the enemy how little he is actually able to exercise naval supremacy in his own home waters despite his **enormous** superiority. It is bound to make a very strong impression on the neutrals. It is in any case absolutely inevitable that Britain will lose much prestige as a result of the serious losses incurred off the east coast through mines.
2. In recognition of the direct threat to the North Atlantic routes, heavy naval forces were concentrated in the North Atlantic area with the aim of preventing German naval forces from making sweeps into the Atlantic and also in the hope that their superiority would suffice to bring them to a **standstill** within a very short time.

The strategic effect of a diversion has been achieved and will probably prevail for a considerable time. The focal point of the

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

enemy defenses has quite clearly been shifted to the North Atlantic. Heavy naval forces have been withdrawn from other important defense areas (Canada-North Atlantic route-Mid-Atlantic). The concentration of naval forces which would have had to be expected in the South Atlantic on the return of the DEUTSCHLAND will no longer have to be dealt with by the pocket battleship GRAF SPEE.

The following measures reveal the strategic effects in further detail:

The battleship WARSPITE which was proceeding from Canada to Britain has been diverted north into the endangered area with a consequent weakening of the North Atlantic convoy route.

The disposition of the battle cruiser HOOD which had already been detached for the South Atlantic has been changed again for reconnaissance operations in the North Atlantic against the German forces reported there, so that reinforcements for the South Atlantic have been again delayed.

The REPULSE and the FURIOUS have been lured from the Canadian area to the east, thus decidedly weakening the positions in Canada and the Western Atlantic.

The battleship DUNKERQUE is to be sent with a division of flotilla leaders to the area southeast of Iceland, and the battleship STRASBOURG is to be moved away from the Gibraltar area to the Brest area, thus weakening the Mid-Atlantic defense position and the general security of the convoy routes.

Further considerable effects are to be seen in the temporary halting of the convoy traffic, the consequent unrest and insecurity, the increase in air patrols, the demands on personnel and material, and the upheaval in the plans for the future location of the units.

As his tactical countermeasure, the enemy immediately dispositioned the light forces into several groups in the narrow between the Shetlands and Norway, brought up the heavy-cruisers NORFOLK and SUFFOLK from the Channel area to the north, and brought the battleships RODNEY and NELSON into a position off the Shetlands where it seemed that they could resist attack from any direction.

Any assessment of the enemy's countermeasures must be based on the assumption that, the British Admiralty knowing nothing of the

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

situation actually prevailing, jumped to the conclusion that the pocket battleship DEUTSCHLAND in the North Atlantic was bound to break through into home waters and that the battleships chosen to take her under escort would therefore be advancing into the North Atlantic for an operation of short duration.

The enemy measures were badly hampered by the lack of air reconnaissance owing to the weather and the light naval forces' limited scope in heavy seas. The considerable lack of fast heavy ships at this time proved particularly aggravating to the enemy, and the lack of aircraft carriers was bound to be a grave disadvantage.

The enemy strategic measures simply corresponded to the possibilities which the then prevailing distribution of forces offered him, namely, the integration of his heavy forces into a strong concentration capable of engaging and destroying the enemy in the North Atlantic. It led to co-operation between French and British forces which was most favorable to the enemy.

The enemy's tactical measures for the interception of a pocket battleship about to break through into the North Sea lacked all fighting spirit and were hesitant, undecided, and inadequate for the achievement of any result. Indeed, their light naval forces, operating in the North Sea in complete ignorance of German fighting strength, were in grave danger of being overwhelmed by superior German forces had chance not decreed that our tactics should be otherwise.

It is to be assumed that in the light of recent experiences the enemy will be altering the disposition of his forces until his heavy fast battleships and further aircraft carriers have been completed, as he will not want to withdraw all battleships, heavy cruisers, and aircraft carriers from home waters. He will also soon be aware of how seriously endangered his vital ore and wood shipments are going to be, and this may possibly lead him to feel that he can no longer entrust the escorting of the regular convoys to destroyers and cruisers alone. The increased activity of the light reconnaissance forces in the northern part of the North Sea, noticed in conjunction with a continuous all-embracing air reconnaissance, will be the direct result of his recent experiences.

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Finally, the following possibility should also be kept in mind, namely that as soon as the enemy is once again in the material position to do so, he will start thinking about laying a northern minefield in the Shetlands - Norway narrow again, and preparing for it in time for spring 1940 when the weather will have improved.

We think very highly of the results of this, our first battleship operation. That the operation proceeded more or less according to plan despite the most appalling weather conditions, is a fine tribute to the material and the engineering put into the construction of the battleships.

The ships have shown themselves entirely capable of long-range operations. Many of the possibilities which have suggested themselves from recent experiences should be examined in detail. This operation has greatly increased the confidence of our staff and complements in the fighting strength of the battleships and has eliminated all fear of being forced to "ride idly at anchor in the roads".

But we must first await an evaluation of our own experiences and of the future behavior of the enemy before any fresh operational possibilities for the battleships can be discussed. In connection with these discussions, the question of taking the offensive and carrying out a minelaying operation within the enemy's own area, Orkneys - Shetlands - Norway, should be carefully examined so that this defensive measure is taken at the right time and the enemy plans for blocking the northern outlet of the North Sea are made more difficult.

Baltic Sea:

At 0850 the German trawler ISLAND struck a mine off Kjels Nor inside the German declared area and sank. Only three out of a complement of 17 have been rescued. The Danish torpedo boat LAXEN and a German patrol boat were on the scene to render assistance.

The minefield patrol and minelayer "11" have been stationed in the Great Belt to clarify the mine situation there.

Minesweeping operations have been continued in Danzig Bay.

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Submarine Situation 27 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

There are still the following submarines in the Atlantic operational area: Submarines U "28", U "29", U "43".

Off Kola Bay: Submarine U "38".

Homeward bound: Submarines U "26", U "49", U "53", U "41".

North Sea:

The Atlantic submarine U "35", U "47", U "48" still in the Shetlands - Orkney area, were ordered by the Commanding Admiral, Submarines to reconnoiter in the reconnaissance lines between the Shetlands and Norway and to take advantage of all attack opportunities there.

Submarines U "56", U "21" put out for the operational area in the North Sea. Assignment: Torpedo attacks in the area from Kinnaird Head to the Firth of Forth (submarine U "21" in the northern part, submarine U "56" in the southern part).

Submarine Warfare against Merchant Shipping.

The following directive on the employment of submarines against wood and ore routes from Britain to Murmansk and Narvik has been dispatched to the Commander, Submarines:

1. The Attaché in Moscow made the following report: From 18 Nov. not one single more report of wood transports leaving Murmansk harbor. On the other hand there are 13 reports of wood transports which have entered and discharged their cargo. Radio monitoring reported as follows: No wood transports have been observed leaving Murmansk since 8 Nov. whereas shipping had been constantly observed there prior to that date.

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

2. Because of this new situation, presumably a seasonal one, submarines U "38", U "36" were sent into the Narvik area against the heavy ore exports to Britain reported from there.

3. The supplying of submarine U "36" so that she can prolong her operations and inspect North Base will be further investigated.

The British Admiralty has announced that:

The steamer BORKUM, which was captured by a British warship and which was to be brought into harbor, has been attacked by a submarine whose guns eventually set her on fire. She was then abandoned and drifted aground. The prize crew suffered no casualties. Four German sailors were killed.

(See the report of submarine U "33" on 26 Nov.).

Merchant Shipping 27 Nov.

Losses: The 5,000 ton steamer TENERIFFE scuttled herself, presumably northeast of Iceland.

The 2,185 GRT steamer EILBECK has been captured, presumably in Icelandic waters.

The 4,458 GRT steamer KONSUL HDR. FISSE has been captured, presumably northwest of Iceland.

Two freighters have been transferred to Chile.

According to a telegram from Washington, the attempt which had been made there to sell German steamers to America and other neutrals has failed owing to the attitude of the British and French Governments which displayed more and more hostility towards the sale of German merchantmen to neutrals and refused to acknowledge the change of colors and the transfer of ownership.

In view of the very high costs and the exchange difficulties, the problem of German merchant tonnage in neutral ports is growing more and more pressing. About 150 ships are involved at the moment without a chance of attempting a return passage. The disadvantage of

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

selling these ships to neutrals which is still sometimes possible, lies in the fact that even after having been sold, the ships continue being exposed to the risk of enemy seizure in accordance with prize regulations. As a result, the neutral purchasers have in each case tried to obtain a British acknowledgement of the change of colors which has been given on the understanding that the British Government will at any time be entitled to requisition these ships for its own use after having compensated the owner with the purchase price. Thus every German ship sold abroad will simply serve as a further reinforcement to enemy tonnage.

Certain merchant warfare countermeasures will therefore have to be taken. We shall have to destroy all German merchantmen unable to attempt a break-through to home waters and which we can no longer afford to hold owing to lack of foreign currency. They will have to be sunk in deep waters outside the ports before the enemy has a chance to seize them.

The Special Staff for Mercantile and Economic Warfare has been requested to examine this question with the Reich Ministries involved.

Merchant Warfare Measures:

At 1200 the Special Staff for Mercantile and Economic Warfare held a meeting at the Armed Forces High Command on German countermeasures against the export blockade planned by Great Britain.

Result:

The Fuehrer is to be requested to decide on German countermeasures after having given due consideration to the following possibilities:

1. The effect of the neutral protests should be awaited and in the interim an attempt made to intensify the neutrals' anti- British attitude so that they submit an even stiffer note of protest. The propaganda machine must be brought into full play. In view of the measures taken by the United States (restricted zone), the neutrals must once again be warned not to touch enemy ports (war zone).

And Germany must declare that she reserves herself the right to take any necessary measures.

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

If, as expected, the neutral protests fail, then every opportunity for the further intensification of economic warfare, with air support if necessary, should be taken. No immediate decisive results are expected from our intensification of naval warfare. It must above all be made quite clear that the neutrals will be the first to suffer from the German measures.

2. Germany should make immediate reply with a further intensification of warfare against merchant shipping, extending her action to embrace British exports. And whenever possible the Air Force should come into immediate joint action and even be sanctioned to attack harbors.

These measures may possibly even have to be considered between the issuing of the Order in Council and the launching of the land offensive if the latter does not take place very soon.

3. Unrestricted naval and aerial warfare in conjunction with the land offensive (released by the Order in Council) could if necessary be started by a Fuehrer Proclamation.

The Naval Staff feels that the British measure definitely requires an answer because the moment is a favorable one for counteraction. In the opinion of the Naval Staff, the reply to the Order in Council should not take the same form but should rather manifest itself in air force attacks or also in an intensification of economic warfare. Naval warfare has already been so intensified that a further intensification would appear neither an advisable nor a necessary reply to the Order in Council. In the Naval Staff's opinion it would be wiser first to await the actual results of the Order in Council and also the results of the propaganda offensive.

All countermeasures must be taken keeping the Order in Council well in mind. Any reply should be issued within ten **days or 2 weeks** though there is perhaps no need for one at all. Should the whole offensive which includes the drive for the intensification of warfare against merchant shipping be once more delayed, prize regulations could be altered by, for instance, declaring enemy exports to be contraband or by promulgating a special law **along the** same lines.

-As the Air Force bases its operations almost entirely on the Navy's plans, the Chief, Operations Branch will inform the Air Force, General Staff of these plans and of the Navy's attitude this afternoon.

CONFIDENTIAL

27 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

In the afternoon the King of England signed the Order in Council for the intensification of the British blockade **in order to strangle German exports.**

According to Reuter, the law will not be enacted for a few days in order that various differences of opinion with the neutrals may first be cleared up. A special note was submitted to the neutral representatives in London, giving a detailed statement of the British Government's Order in Council in the hope of swaying them in Britain's favor.

An answer to the various neutral protests was made at the same time.

CONFIDENTIAL

28 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. Fuehrer decision - key word 2703.
2. Group East requested the blocking of Flint Channel with nets to gain the following advantages:

reduced length, much easier to patrol, less swell, searches facilitated.

The Naval Staff recognizes that it would be easier to patrol but otherwise fails to discern any important strategic advantages which would justify imposing considerable disadvantages - particularly in political spheres. The Chief, Naval Staff has agreed that we should for the time being wait and see what the effects of the blocking which has just been carried out will be.

3. Discussions on the fortifications which would be needed along the Dutch-Belgian coast in the event of a German invasion led to the following results:

The Naval Staff is of the opinion that coastal defenses should only be planned on a scale sufficient to keep the enemy naval forces in check. There is no need for an extensive coastal organization. There is no question of a marine corps or a similar land organization being established in Flanders as in World War I because present conditions are so very different from those which then prevailed. In the case of Belgium and the Netherlands the Air Force will have to undertake **most** coastal defense duties.

Batteries should only be established where they will be the most urgently needed. The Naval Staff considers they will be needed at the following places:

a. Holland:

1. In Northern Holland Texel will have to be fortified in order to control inward and outward bound traffic routes.
2. IJmuiden: one medium-sized battery (**barrage** battery).
3. The railway battery "Gneisenau" in the Helder area and south of it.

CONFIDENTIAL

28 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

4. Hook of Holland: suitable for one heavy battery.
5. Walcheren: one medium-sized battery for blocking the **Scheldt** mouth.
6. If necessary, another medium-sized battery depending on how the situation develops on the western side of Terschelling.

b. Belgium:

7. One heavy battery at Blankenberghe to cover the whole coast. Then two heavy and three or four medium-sized batteries plus the railway battery will be required. The Operations Division, Naval Staff will be responsible for the necessary preparations. The Commander-in-Chief, Air Force will be responsible for providing defenses. The Navy will be responsible for air raid precautions for the troops.

The Chief, Naval Staff has agreed to the proposals.

Commander Besthorn (Assistant Attaché in Holland) is to be informed of the situation and plans. Commander Besthorn has submitted a survey of conditions in the Netherlands.

The Dutch do not think they have any need to anticipate a British landing operation. Even at the present moment, with the possibility of German troops marching in, the Dutch Government has apparently shown no signs of wishing to appeal to the British for protection and to take sides with the Western Powers. Should Germany march in, the British are said to have promised the Dutch that they will immediately penetrate Dutch territory with 800 - 1000 planes and attack German troops.

The need for making a survey of Dutch patrol activity, shipping routes, mine channels etc. has been pointed out to the Attaché.

CONFIDENTIAL

28 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Special Reports on the Enemy 28 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

British patrols off Lisbon are said to have been reinforced lately. Destroyers are being used.

At the moment the British 15,241 ton P & O liner COMORIN is being converted into an auxiliary cruiser in Capetown. (Transmitted to pocket battleship GRAF SPEE). The aircraft carrier HERMES and one French flotilla-leader put into Freetown. (GRAF SPEE will be informed)

France:

The cruiser DUQUAY - TROUIN and the flotilla leader VALMY are refueling in Lorient. The battleship PARIS is in the Eastern Mediterranean. One cruiser (presumably PRIMAUGUET) has been detected in the Freetown area.

The French Admiralty in Paris has given orders to continue searching merchantmen as before until new trade control regulations are issued.

North Sea:

Various enemy vessels have been located in the Shetlands - Norway area. One heavy British cruiser was sighted by submarine U "35" 60 miles east of the Shetlands and was then torpedoed by submarine U "47" 12 miles northeast of this position. (See "Submarine Situation").

Eight Bristol Blenheim's attacked the sea plane base at Borkum in the evening.

Radio Lands End transmitted a mine warning for the Dunkirk area, and minesweeping operations by French vessels have been observed in Dunkirk roads.

CONFIDENTIAL

28 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Own Situation 28 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report. (See Submarine Situation).

The pocket battleship GRAF SPEE has been informed of the sweep made by the battleships into the Iceland - Faeroes area and of the results of mine warfare.

North Sea:

After submarine U "35" had sent out a reconnaissance signal at 1328, approximately 60 miles off the Shetlands, on a heavy British LONDON class cruiser, submarine U "47" reported at 1334, position about twelve miles northeast from where submarine U "35" sent out her reconnaissance signal: "Have torpedoed one LONDON-class cruiser. One hit. Wind strength 10".

This shows that the reconnaissance positions organized by the Commander, Submarines east of the Shetlands have served their purpose. Lieutenant (s.g.) Prien has for the second time achieved a magnificent success which has led, we hope, to the ship's complete loss. From the report's wording a definite hit must have been scored. Although the cruiser is bound to have been seriously endangered owing to the very poor weather conditions, her sinking is, however, still only conjectured.

Nothing can at the moment be drawn from the enemy radio picture. The British Admiralty simply transmitted the German radio bulletin word for word without comment to the command stations in the home area. The BBC denied the report rather unconvincingly by announcing that no confirmation of this German report has as yet been received from the Admiralty.

At dusk enemy bombers carried out a low level machine-gun attack on the **seaplane** station at Borkum. No bombs, no losses, slight damage. The planes were located 23 kilometers away by radar.

The 3.7 cm gun and the type 15 machine-gun defenses achieved no results. On his homeward flight the enemy machinegunned merchantmen in the River Ems.

The raid showed up the station's inadequate and badly organized anti-aircraft defense. The Commander-in-Chief, Air Force, who is

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

responsible for the anti-aircraft defenses, gave orders for their immediate reinforcement. At the moment the Air Force station's sole anti-aircraft defenses consist of two 3.7 cm anti-aircraft guns and a few type 15 machine guns. Furthermore the four anti-aircraft batteries in the Borkum fortified area each have two 2 cm guns which they need as protection from low level attacks. They cannot be withdrawn for the protection of the Air Force station. The North Sea station has been requested to make further investigations. Barrage balloons might be one possibility.

The battleships SCHARNHORST and GNEISENAU will now be undergoing their routine dockyard repair period so that they will not be operational again until January.

Baltic Sea:

The Commanding Admiral, Defenses East who sailed with the patrol steamer RUGARD to assess the situation for himself, considered that there was very little submarine danger in the Baltic Sea. Precisely because the most vigorous measures were taken, many a false submarine alarm was raised. The many recent submarine sighting reports are therefore to be treated with great caution: **all precautions must nevertheless be taken on the assumption** that there really are enemy submarines in the Baltic Sea.

According to foreign press and radio reports, both the Swedish and Danish Navy Departments have announced that the passage through the five meter fairway south of Fälvsterbo has been closed owing to the danger of drifting mines. According to other reports, pilots refused to sail through the narrow fairway because the mine menace had increased. It is said that Trelleborg and Malmö harbors are overcrowded because not a ship has put out - not even the Danish mail steamer - and that Swedish minesweepers are busy minesweeping. There is very bad feeling in international shipping circles.

It has been learned from another source that it is being said abroad that our minefield has been brought up to two miles from the coast.

The Swedish press has published the note of protest delivered by Sweden to the German Government.

CONFIDENTIAL

28 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Owing to the Swedish assertion that the incidents of the last few weeks between German merchant warfare forces and Swedish naval forces and planes took place within the Swedish three mile limit, a fresh investigation into the territorial waters question has been ordered.

In the course of the discussions to be held with the Swedish Attaché in an attempt to settle recent incidents, he **will be** reminded that the Naval Staff has issued **charts to the German naval forces setting forth the limits of the Swedish 3-mile line which they have to respect.**

These charts may be submitted to the Attaché at his request.

The **Groups** and Commander, Submarines were ordered to remind their forces to keep to the limits recently decided on and which were recorded in special charts.

Should incidents occur, immediately check the ship's position and make sure it is definitely outside the limits. If she is, take ruthless action. Should there be a parley, remind Sweden, if necessary, of the records of the limits to which German forces are bound, and promise that the matter will be subsequently settled with the High Command, Navy.

Submarine Situation 28 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

Submarine U "49" returned to her home base from **a long-range operation.**

Submarine U "29" reported that owing to the weather and the moon a minelaying operation cannot be carried out in the Bristol Channel at the moment. She has been detected and has so far achieved no results.

CONFIDENTIAL

28 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

North Sea:

For submarine U "47"'s success see "North Sea".

Submarine U "61" and U "58" put out for the North Sea operational area.

Assignments:

Submarine U "61" minelaying off Newcastle.

Submarine U "58" minelaying off Lowestoft.

Merchant Shipping 28 Nov.

Two steamers coming from Vigo have arrived in Norway.
The steamer SANTA FE has been captured by French forces.
The total loss of merchantmen has thus risen to 32 =
3.7 %.

Economic Warfare Problems:

The Special Staff, Mercantile and Economic Warfare
(Captain Weichold) made the following report:

"It is learned from the Chief, Air Force, General Staff, that the
Commander-in-Chief, Air Force proposes to submit the following
suggestions to the Fuehrer at 1500 this afternoon:

The Air Force should reply to the British Order in Council for
blockading German exports by carrying out large-scale attacks on new-
ly constructed ships, docks, ships lying in port, and port
installations.

Ships at sea can only be included as targets if the Navy also
takes part in this general intensification.

Focal point for the Air Force: west coast of Britain.
Focal point for the Navy : east coast of Britain.

It should be planned so as to allow time:

CONFIDENTIAL

23 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

- a. for the preparations of the Air Force itself,
- b. for issuing a warning to the neutrals on the same lines as the Navy's recent note.

The press should be given the impression that Germany now finds herself compelled to take whatever measures she thinks fit in reply to the Order in Council."

The Special Staff requested the Naval Staff to give its opinion to which the Naval Staff, Operations Branch replied as follows:

1. The Naval Staff would more than welcome an intensification of air force activity which has indeed been long awaited. There is no need for this intensification to appear in any way connected with the Order in Council.

2. The **Order** has not yet been made public. Its context will decide the intensity of our countermeasures.

3. At the moment the Navy still maintains the opinion that for the time being the only move in answer to the Order should be to rally the neutrals. Further measures should be taken as the situation develops.

At 1745 Captain Weichold reported that the Fuehrer had for the time being turned down the proposals of the Commander-in-Chief, Air Force. The Naval Staff's opinion is being therefore adhered to and a waiting attitude has been adopted with the mental reservation that any necessary measures will be taken when needed. Furthermore an energetic propaganda offensive is being launched for the benefit of the neutrals.

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Items of Political Importance 29 Nov.

1. The Norwegian Government has been discussing a new plan in the hope that it may lead the belligerents to have the Hague Convention revised. It would restrict the passage of belligerent warships through Norwegian or other neutral waters to a period of 48 hours.

This Norwegian move has been instigated by Great Britain.

2. The Swedish protest against the blocking of the Sound up to the three mile limit has been received.

(See Part C, Vol. VIII).

3. The Russian Government is planning to lay claim to the four mile limit for the waters of the Baltic States.

Should this be so the Naval Staff cannot sanction this claim. It would therefore, be advisable to make this quite clear to the Russians in good time.

4. For the latest reports on the Russo-Finnish conflict see the **Foreign Press**. The tension has still further increased. America has proposed to act as mediator.

5. The Japanese Government has requested the British and German Governments for an official statement on the sinking of the Japanese steamer TERAKUMI MARU. (For further details see War Diary, Part C, Vol. VIII).

6. British Export Blockade: For the official wording of the British Export Blockade Decree and extracts from the French orders see "Foreign Press 550".

Making the dispatching of the British stipulations for trading with the neutrals coincide with the launching of their press propaganda campaign has to be acknowledged a very skilful political move towards a further intensification of the blockade. The essential difference between British and German naval warfare is particularly stressed: whereas Germany is bound to cause neutral cargo and shipping losses, Britain has no intention of sinking neutral tonnage; on the contrary she wishes to act in the interests of the neutrals as much as possible and will reduce neutral losses to a minimum by paying them compensation. The British press has

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

also pointed to the need for the following economic warfare precautions to be urged in addition to extending the blockade to embrace German exports:

Seizing German overseas markets.
Purchasing food from the Baltic States.
Buying up products in Southeastern Europe.

7. Report from the Madrid Embassy that the Caudillo had consented to give his **personal** support to our request for German submarines to be supplied in Spanish ports or bays. The Spanish Foreign Minister has agreed to the proposal of choosing a reliable person, if possible a former naval officer, and providing him with a written Government authorization which would help him to deal with various subordinate Spanish officials in accordance with German wishes.

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

In connection with the submarine mine warfare campaign, the actual results of the recent minelaying operations off the east coast of Britain cannot yet be seen in detail, but it is considered that the indirect ones have far exceeded the actual rate of sinking reported. The battleship operation made a further contribution to these results. As the Air Force has not intensified the air offensive in support of the Navy, the struggle against Britain continues to be left entirely in the Navy's hands. With reference to the directives recently issued on warfare in the North Sea, Group West and the Commander, Submarines received the following directives on the future plans for that area:

a. The minelaying offensive is an urgent necessity. The offensive is to include the smaller east coast ports as well as the larger ones, the convoy approach points, and the west coast ports (Clyde and Liverpool) which have not yet been mined. Torpedo submarine warfare will have to be temporarily withdrawn in favor of submarine mining.

b. In addition to maintaining the warfare against merchant shipping in the North Sea and the Skagerrak, the Norway - Britain convoy routes must be attacked by surface forces from time to time.

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

c. The enemy fishing fleet south of the Dogger Bank and off Indefatigable Bank must be attacked. These fishing vessels, should, if possible, be brought in to increase our own fishing fleet.

Commander-in-Chief, Navy sent the following telegram to:

Group West
Group East
Fleet
North Sea Station
Baltic Sea Station

"In a speech to the front line commanders-in-chief of all the services, the Fuehrer paid high tribute to the Navy's performance and success which bore the stamp of a healthy fighting spirit tempered by a strong sense of personal responsibility. He most especially thanked the Commander-in-Chief, Navy for the fine spirit of the units under his command.

It is with great pride that I make this known to the Navy in the hope that this will spur us all on to further deeds of prowess."

Special Reports on the Enemy 29 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain: The battle cruiser HOOD whose departure from the South Atlantic to relieve the battleship PENOWN was postponed owing to the German battleship operation is now to sail in the Faeroes area.

France: Radio intelligence reported as follows:

At noon on 29 Nov. the Commanding Admiral, Atlantic Fleet will be approximately 350 miles northwest of Ireland, probably aboard the DUNKERQUE; with him and southeast of him are said to be two cruisers of the 4th Division and flotilla leaders of the 2nd Light Squadron, some of which will be sent back to Brest where they are due to arrive on the forenoon of 2 Dec. The **flotilla** leader MOGADOR has been located in the Bristol Channel.

The STRASBOURG, five flotilla leaders, and two destroyers all put into Brest at 1100. This **force** has been under the Commanding

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Admiral, West since 27 Nov.

Further large numbers of French vessels have been detected at sea in the Brest area. Radio monitoring also detected various convoy movements.

The cruiser COLBERT put into Freetown on 28 Nov.

Submarines are lying in wait **for** German steamers off the Azores and Vigo where collaboration with fishing vessels has sometimes been observed.

North Sea:

The enemy forces are still lying distributed in accordance with the report on the appearance of German battleships in the Iceland - Faeroes area. On the afternoon of 28 Nov. the battleships NELSON and RODNEY were in the area of the Orkneys; the HOOD was thought to be off the Faeroes, while numerous radio bearings pointed to the Faeroes - Shetlands area, and air reconnaissance detected light forces approximately 60 miles west of Bergen.

The enemy still maintains as strongly as ever that the pocket battleship DEUTSCHLAND was the ship involved in the action of 23 Nov. And yet it is definitely to be assumed that, especially after the return of the battleships to Wilhelmshaven, he must have gained accurate knowledge of the forces which actually did appear south of Iceland.

The torpedoing of a LONDON-class cruiser is still being denied by the BBC.

A convoy for Norway was to pass through Prince's Channel this morning. It is, therefore, to be assumed that there are still ways of sailing through the Thames.

Baltic Sea:

A fresh submarine alarm was **issued** in Kiel Bay as a result of the observations of the Buelk coastal anti-submarine listening station.

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Own Situation 29 Nov.

Atlantic:

Nothing to report.

The following directive was dispatched to the GRAF SPEE:

"As far as prevailing conditions will allow, contraband of great value to the German war economy such as precious metals, foreign currency, bonds, scarce metals, ship's safe etc. should be secured before scuttling captured ships."

North Sea:

The Naval Air Force's reconnaissance detected light naval forces in the Shetlands - Norway passage approximately 60 miles west of Bergen, and a convoy approximately 70 miles west of Sogne Fiord on a northerly course. The planes were at various times attacked by enemy bombers close to the Norwegian coast. As the Xth Air Corps' planes cannot take off owing to the weather, the reconnaissance planes were recalled during the forenoon.

This has been a black day for the Naval Air Force. Five out of the 17 Do 18's which took off were lost; three made forced landings, the crews were rescued and interned (one on the Faeroes, two in Norway), one crashed, one is missing.

Group West reports that a double net barrage has been laid in the Elbe off Kugelbake.

Baltic Sea:

Two Finnish ships were captured in the course of the warfare against merchant shipping.

According to reports from **Goeteborg**, over 40 drifting mines were reported in the **Goeteborg** area on 28 Nov. Night traffic should be stopped in this mine infested area.

On the evening of 29 Nov. Radio Copenhagen announced that according to a Swedish report the 5 meter passage to Falsterbo could be used again. Enquiries should be made with the pilot vessels stationed there.

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

According to reports from Denmark, fast motor fishing vessels are to be used by the Danish Navy in the Little Belt as Belt minefield guard vessels.

In the opinion of Group East the Danish minelaying operations have created an extremely difficult situation. The Group persists in attributing the losses in the Great Belt to Danish mines drifting with their anchors, a menace to the whole Great Belt passage. The **alternate** passage from the Baltic Sea through the Great Belt should therefore for the time being be blocked to the fleet and only **reopened** in a few days' time because weather conditions are making minesweeping operations impossible. The Group requests that the Danish mines already laid be swept and nets laid out instead; should this be impossible, Denmark will be requested to provide detailed data about these minefields.

The Naval Staff held the following point of view on the matter: We have no grounds for doubting the efficiency of the minefields laid by the Danes at the request of the Naval Staff to close the Belt entrances.

The fact that perhaps both Danish and German mines in the Great Belt minefield have started drifting is extremely distressing, not to say disturbing, when we know that two of our own ships have already been lost. But these present shipping losses are no adequate reason for concluding that the whole of the only recently completed Danish minelaying operation is now absolutely pointless.

The following teletype was transmitted to Group East and to the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic:

- "1.) The present situation which the presence of drifting mines has created in the Great Belt has not produced any tactical changes in our attitude to the Danish minelaying question.
- 2.) The Danes have been requested to inspect the actual minefields and their channels.
- 3.) The promise of data on the Danish minefields has been obtained.
- 4.) Launch minesweeping operations as soon as weather conditions permit. Report the mine driftings actually observed.
- 5.) Blocking with nets which had been suggested to the Danes and which the Naval Staff had also considered necessary, cannot be met

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

by them because:

1. There are no nets available.
2. They will not agree to using German nets.
3. From previous Danish experience net blockings would be unsuitable owing to the nature of the currents in the Belts."

The Naval Attaché in Copenhagen was at the same time informed by the Naval Staff of the further wishes of the German Navy (see Naval Staff's letter, War Diary Part B, Vol. V, page 59).

They cover the following points:

1. The need for a spot check survey of the areas north of the minefields right into the Kattegat by German forces.
2. Data on the positions, the density, and the types of mines in the Danish minefields.
3. The need for a really efficient way of closing off the passage through Groen Sound to prevent submarines breaking through via Denmark.
4. The safety of Alsen Sound must be ensured with boom defenses near Sonderburg.

Submarine Situation 29 Nov.

Atlantic:

In the Atlantic operational area:
Submarines U "28", U "29", U "41", U "43".
On the evening of 29 Nov. radio monitoring detected the dispatching of eleven patrol vessels into the Bristol Channel to chase a submarine (U "28", U "29"?) reported off Bull Point.

In the operational area east of the Shetlands:
Submarines U "35", U "47", U "48".

Submarine U "47" gave firing data on the attack on the

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

heavy cruiser on 28 Nov. The submarine heard a detonation after 86 seconds. Impact not observed, because periscope was submerged. Damage observed beneath starboard torpedo tubes after periscope had re-emerged. Cruiser then turned away. Given all these facts a hit seems highly probable. A total loss, however, uncertain.

Submarine U "53" put in from a war cruise in the Atlantic. Submarine U "38" reported observations off Kola Bay and Teriberka. No traffic. Brisk fishing vessel patrol. No results up to now. Probably detected by a Russian steamer.

North Sea:

Submarine U "35" together with submarine U "21" was assigned to the Kinnaird Head operational area as far as 57 degrees.

Submarine U "31" will occupy the Abbs Head area up to Coquet Island. Submarine U "56" is south of 57 degrees as far as the Firth of Forth.

The submarines have been ordered not to carry out warfare against merchant shipping in accordance with the prize regulations. Outward bound: Submarines U "61", U "58".

Submarine Warfare Against Merchant Shipping.

The Naval Attaché in Madrid reported as follows: It is rumored that German submarines have penetrated into the Mediterranean causing brisk air reconnaissance east of Gibraltar and off Oran, the stopping of troop **transports** and the establishment of submarine listening stations.

An agent in Oran confirmed these reports on 18 Nov. Submarines have been repeatedly reported west and east of Gibraltar as far as south of Almeria during the last few days.

(The impression prevailing there may have been achieved by the dummy periscopes which were to be used by our submarines in the Mediterranean, U "53" and U "26").

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Merchant Shipping 29 Nov.

Own Shipping:

Two steamers have arrived in Norway from abroad. According to a report from the Consulate in Rio, the steamer DRESDEN, the GRAF SPEE's supply ship, put into Santos on 26 Nov.

On 29 Nov. the following directive was radioed to all German merchantmen in the North Sea and the Baltic Sea:

"Great Belt closed for the time being. Pass through Sound or Little Belt at own discretion.

Naval Staff."

Likewise all authorized shipping agents and naval offices were informed that owing to the mine menace the Great Belt had been closed to shipping until further notice. The Ministry of Transportation wired to the consulates in Norway via the Foreign Office:

"Until reopening of Great Belt only load ships which cannot pass through Little Belt owing to their masts, to 23 foot draught.

Ministry of Transportation."

Neutral Shipping.

According to the statement of the captain of a Danish steamer, Danish steamers bound for Britain have of late been sailing close into the Swedish and Norwegian coasts until latitude 64°, approximately off Trondheim. Their subsequent course is not known.

Intelligence Center, Spain made the following report:

Insignificant amount of neutral shipping off west coast of Spain. Their national colors are floodlit at night. There are ships proceeding without lights on southerly courses. According to steamers' reports, the destination of convoys passing through the Strait of Gibraltar and proceeding on the Valencia-Balearic Islands route is presumably France.

CONFIDENTIAL

29 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Economic Warfare Measures.

For the records of the "German Economic Research Institute" on the results of the discussions with the Economic Branch, Armed Forces High Command on Danish export possibilities see War Diary, Part C, Vol. XII.

CONFIDENTIAL

30 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff.

Special Items:

1. The Chief, Operations Branch made a personal report on the plans of the Commanding Admiral, Group West for the forces of the Commanding Admiral during the next few weeks:

(see Group West Gkdos. 295/39 A I Chefs. dated 28 Nov.)

This letter crossed with the Naval Staff's directive (see 29 Nov.)
Abstract:

a. Owing to the destroyer's routine dockyard overhaul it will be impossible to put any of the forces into operation before 3 Dec. Two destroyers will remain in Schillig Roads as a patrol division.

b. A destroyer operation against the British fishing fleet south of the Dogger Bank as far as the southern part of the North Sea (Hoofden) is planned for 3 - 6 Dec.

c. In case of the further postponement of the special operations or of their completion: minelaying operation by destroyers in the Newcastle area and east of Yarmouth - Lowestoft.

e. Battleships, torpedo boats, and PT boats will not be available during the next few weeks.

2. Personal report of the Commander, Submarines on submarine warfare conditions and future plans: (see also War Diary Part C, Vol. IV).

a. Survey of recent successes in mercantile warfare and minefield operations, torpedo failure difficulties, evaluation of enemy countermeasures, efficiency of complements.

b. Plans for further submarine operations.

Focal point: minelaying operations, but no slackening of submarine torpedo operations.

I. Minelaying operations.

Basic idea:

Methodical intensive blocking of places suitable for minelaying operations. It will generally

CONFIDENTIAL

30 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

speaking have to be done at the new moon.

According to previous experience, the TMB mine is deadly up to 25 meters. At the request of the Commander, Submarines, the Mining and Barrage Inspectorate has made a temporary alteration in the construction of the TMA mine by increasing the charge to 1000 kilos (TMC). It is expected to act up to 36 meters and the first mines should be ready by the middle of December, thus giving the submarines more opportunity to use ground mines.

Commander, Submarines' plans:

Expanding the minefields in the Firth of Forth. A very difficult task for which only the most experienced commanders will come into question.

Mining of the Firth of Clyde against military targets. (But only when the TMC mine becomes available).

Mining of the Bristol Channel against merchant shipping.

Mining of the Liverpool area.

It will be difficult to execute, and a complete blocking will be impossible.

Other smaller operations aiming at blockading the east coast of Britain by laying mines off Newcastle and Lowestoft are to be carried on at the same time as this large-scale program.

The following places head the list for later mine-laying operations:

Falmouth, Plymouth, St. Alban's Head St. Catherine's Deep, Royal Sovereign, Dungeness.

II. Torpedo operations:

It is in principle necessary that torpedo operations should be maintained side by side with minelaying operations:

CONFIDENTIAL

30 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

as a means of defense and of harassing the enemy, especially at focal points for which minelaying operations are inadequate; to create a wider basis for further developments with special reference to the catastrophic number of torpedo failures lately, and the need for newly introduced improvements to be thoroughly tested; to provide assignments for young commanders who could not be entrusted with difficult minelaying operations.

Torpedo submarines should be chiefly used in the following areas:
western outlet of the Channel, east coast of Britain, particularly in the Kinnaird Head - Newcastle area and the Orkneys - Shetlands area.

c. The Commander, Submarines considers that the employment of submarines off the Norwegian coast would not be so promising because the exact spot where the shipping traffic leaves the territorial waters is not known.

d. The question of laying mines off Halifax, where the Naval Staff considers they are very much needed, will be examined by the Commander, Submarines. At the moment the Commander, Submarines considers every single dispersal of available forces to be disadvantageous. Because of the length of the approach route under winter weather conditions, there would be very little time for the operation itself. It also seems that it would only be possible if a supply ship were provided off Greenland.

e. In the opinion of the Commander, Submarines, the construction of submarine tankers is urgently necessary. Small tankers would be better than medium-sized ones. No torpedoes. The Chief, Naval Staff has decided on the construction of at least two submarine tankers. Their construction must be speeded up.

f. The Commander, Submarines advises against announcing a declared area because the submarines are still finding good opportunities for attack there and it is difficult to predict the effect of such an announcement. The Commander, Submarines therefore suggests waiting until the operational experiences of the submarines now operating in this area have been received.

CONFIDENTIAL

30 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

The Naval Staff agreed with the Commander, Submarines. After having made a thorough study of the question of whether to announce a declared area, the Naval Staff came to the following decision for the time being:

The announcement of a declared area scheduled for 1 Dec. has been cancelled.

Reasons:

1. From the explanations of the Commander, Submarines an increase in the number of submarine successes is not to be expected. The submarines have excellent opportunities at the moment. The effect of announcing a declared area cannot be predicted.
2. An abandonment of the policy of mine warfare without announcing a declared area which has been pursued until now, would be politically undesirable. The aim of German naval warfare is to stop any merchant shipping to and from Britain and to frighten all neutrals away from British waters. Should we announce a declared area, the neutrals will then say with reference to the mines which have already been laid by Germany off the Thames, Humber etc. that Germany should have also announced those areas at the same time, and they will claim the right for their merchant shipping to proceed undisturbed wherever no declared areas had been announced. This may possibly have a detrimental effect on the minelaying operation planned off the west coast of England.
3. When expressions such as "warning area" or "declared area" are pinned down to a definite meaning, there is always the danger of undesirable political repercussions which can only be justified when there are important military advantages attached to them. But none are at present anticipated.

Items of Political Importance.

Hostilities have begun between Soviet Russia and Finland. Russian troops have invaded the Karelian Isthmus. Air raids on Helsinki. The coastal emplacements were shelled from the sea. Russian troops have occupied the Finnish island of Seiskaari. Troops are advancing on the Rybachy Peninsula on Kola. Finland has declared war. General

CONFIDENTIAL

30 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Mannerheim is the Commander-in-Chief. The United States offered to act as mediator. Further developments are still uncertain. The Finnish Government has resigned.

The Soviet Government is still trying to reach a peaceful settlement by making the Finns yield in the face of heavy military pressure.

British Intensification of the Blockade.

According to reports from the Washington Embassy, the United States have no intention of lodging any protests to Great Britain or of joining the neutrals in a collective protest. The United States presumably considers the British reprisals against German mine warfare to be fully justified and in accordance with international law. Otherwise complete reserve has been maintained as American interests are not involved.

Special Reports on the Enemy 30 Nov.

Atlantic:

Great Britain:

Distribution of Forces: Contrary to yesterday's reports, Radio Monitoring Service thinks that the battle cruiser HOOD may be in the Channel again. The Commanding Admiral of the Battle Cruiser Squadron who was located west of Northern Scotland is presumably no longer aboard the HOOD.

Prisoners of war from the RAWALPINDI stated that four auxiliary cruisers of approximately 15,000 tons each, IRANIA, CATTARO, STONEWALL, and RAWALPINDI, belonged to the Northern Patrol. The ships remained in position for nine days, and three days each were allotted for the approach, the return, and a harbor period. Their area of activity was between Iceland and the Faeroes. They had never sighted our cruisers and destroyers there. Warships of the Northern Patrol are said to be between the Shetlands and Norway.

France:

Distribution of Forces: The Commanding Admiral, Atlantic Fleet is

CONFIDENTIAL

30 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

aboard the DUNKERQUE and her escort of light naval forces which had moved north in connection with the German battleship operation are now making for Brest from the area west of the Hebrides. At 2300 on 30 Nov. a flotilla leader was 60 miles west of the Hebrides waiting for the battleship. On 2 Dec. the **force is to** be southwest of Ireland and from there the battleship DUNKERQUE will put into Brest under heavy escort. The 4th Cruiser Division will probably be undertaking the escort. Expected to arrive at Ushant on 3 Dec. British headquarters informed the Commanding Admiral, Atlantic Fleet that a surfaced submarine (U "41"?) had been sighted northwest of Ireland (the DUNKERQUE's route) on 30 Nov. at 0900.

Convoy Movements:

At 1400 Intelligence Center, Spain reported that a convoy of 37 merchantmen and 17 armed tankers put out from Gibraltar making for the west. It was escorted by flotilla leaders and destroyers.

North Sea:

According to a report from the Attaché in Stockholm, from the Norwegian Telegraph Bureau, and from Radio, Daventry, a damaged enemy submarine and two other vessels (cruiser or destroyers) entered Norwegian territorial waters near Stavanger.

East Coast Mine Situation:

According to information from Oslo, the inner reaches of the Thames have been blocked by a wreck so that shipping has been suspended and transferred to Liverpool.

A new British warning area between the Thames and the Schelde estuary has been announced.

Shipping obstructions and minefields off the main bases are to be substituted by new ones.

The 8,000 ton Norwegian tanker REALF, the 2,700 ton British steamer SHEAF CREST, and the 3,100 ton British steamer IONIAN struck mines off the east coast of Britain.

Distribution of Forces:

The battleship RODNEY is inside Scapa Flow with destroyers. Light patrol forces in the Shetlands - Norway narrows.

CONFIDENTIAL

30 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Own Situation 30 Nov.

Atlantic:

The pocket battleship GRAF SPEE in the South Atlantic received the following directive:

- "1. You, yourself will have to decide whether to continue cruiser warfare or to begin the return passage according to the condition your ship is in. Report plans and position if at all possible.
2. If the return is started now, the Naval Staff anticipates that the Bahia - Freetown line will be crossed during the December new moon period and that the break-through of the Shetlands - Norway passage will be at the end of December or beginning of January. No activities are to be undertaken either in Mid-Atlantic or in the North Atlantic during the homeward passage unless some particularly favorable opportunity should present itself, for the return must be kept secret.

The supply ship is also to be ordered home. Whether you return separately or together will be for you to decide.

3. Should there be possibilities of further cruiser warfare, the selection of an operational area for December will be left to you. In view of the impending return every effort should be made to effect a diversion.

The Naval Staff **then** anticipates that the Bahia - Freetown line will be crossed during the January new moon period and that the breakthrough of the Shetlands - Norway passage will be at the end of January or beginning of February.

It would then be possible to provide the support of an advanced battleship sweep."

North Sea:

Nothing to report.

Baltic Sea:

Submarine chasing in the western part of the Baltic Sea has so far been without result because of the bad weather conditions.

CONFIDENTIAL

30 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Warfare Against Merchant Shipping:

Brisk shipping traffic through the Swedish Falsterbo channel. Swedish guard boats and minesweepers are patrolling the territorial limits. A Swedish plane has been repeatedly circling low over our submarines. No shipping has been so far observed in the channel during the night.

One steamer was brought in during the course of warfare against merchant shipping off Oeland and Gotland.

Situation off the Belt minefields:

The Naval Attaché in Copenhagen made the following report:

1. The Danish Navy will have the area north of the Danish minefields continuously patrolled by patrol vessels and planes. Immediately single drifting mines are sighted, shipping will be informed of their position; if large numbers are sighted shipping will be warned throughout the area. But in the opinion of the Danish Navy there is no need for the above-mentioned precautions at the moment. Mine channels will be continuously swept in search of drifting mines.
2. The Danes attach great value to the removal of the wrecks of patrol boat "301" and of fishing vessels which are lying within their territorial waters. We have agreed to clear these wrecks ourselves.
3. As regards the origin of the mines which have caused shipping losses, the Danes firmly maintain that they could not have been Danish ones. Their mines are made active by a current switched on from the mainland, and when they break adrift they automatically cut the current off, thus rendering themselves completely harmless. This is a blocking system which can remain effective for years.
4. The Danes agreed to mine patrols being undertaken by German forces even within Danish territorial waters.
5. The Danes have also agreed to the establishment of a permanent German pilot service in both directions.

It has been requested that the pilot vessel in the northern position should in the interests of Danish neutrality, if possible, not be a naval vessel. (For the letter to the Naval Attaché see War Diary Part B, Vol. V, Page 61).

CONFIDENTIAL

30 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

Submarine Situation:

Atlantic: Nothing to report.

Submarine U "38" reported her position in Kola Bay. She has started her return passage.

Should it be impossible to carry out the minelaying operation off Milford Haven, the Commander, Submarines has ordered submarine U "99" to mine the Bristol Channel east of 3° 56' W and south of 51° 27' N at depths of 15 - 20 meters. The submarine should bear future operations in mind whilst minelaying.

North Sea:

Submarine U "59" put out for the North Sea operational area.

Merchant Shipping.

The following Warning Report No. 105 has been transmitted to the Reich representatives abroad concerned, to serve as a guide to homeward-bound German ships:

"According to the latest observations, the ice **border** in Denmark Strait is at the moment very near the coast of Greenland."

The German consulate in Porto Alegre reported the **court** confiscation of the German motorship MONTEVIDEO because it was in debt **to** the London banking firm, Schroeder. The Naval Attaché in Buenos Aires cancelled the outfitting of the steamer as a supply ship.

The confiscation of further steamers is to be expected.

Neutral Shipping.

According to reports from Lisbon and Amsterdam, some of the members of the crews of Dutch and Greek ships have been refusing to sail owing to the very grave mine menace still prevailing.

CONFIDENTIAL

30 Nov. 1939

CONFIDENTIAL

British War Economy.

According to an agent's report from Melilla, the "Minas del Rif" Company made an agreement with Great Britain and France to deliver 150,000 and 120,000 tons of iron ore respectively, by the end of the year. As the ore must be shipped this year, brisk shipping traffic is to be anticipated in Melilla.

CONFIDENTIAL

